



UNIVERSITETET I AGDER

# **THE IMPACT OF KARAMOJONG- ITESO ETHNIC CONFLICT ON HOUSEHOLD RELATIONSHIPS AND GENDER ROLES IN KATAKWI DISTRICT, UGANDA**

BY

Catherine Tino

SUPERVISORS

Arne Olav Øyhus

David Tumusiime

**University of Agder, 2017**

Faculty of Social Science

Department of Global Development and Planning





**UNIVERSITY OF AGDER**

**MSC. GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING  
SPECIALIZATION IN DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT**

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*The master thesis is carried out as a part of the education at the University of Agder and is therefore approved as part of this education. However, this does not imply that the University answers for the methods that are used or the conclusions that are drawn.*

University of Agder, 2017  
Faculty of Social Science  
Department of Global Development and Planning

## **Abstract**

This study analyzed the direct and indirect impacts of the ethnic conflict between the Karamojong and Iteso ethnic groups in North Eastern Uganda on household livelihoods and the ways in which households respond to and cope with the effects of conflicts through changes in gender roles and relations. A qualitative approach including personal interviews and focus group discussions was employed. The main target group was elderly women and men who have experience from the pre-conflict to the post-conflict period to understand what the gender roles were before, how they changed during the conflict also if the changes are still evident today. The other target group was the youth born during the conflict to understand their gender roles during the conflict and if they still play the same roles today. Officers of the local government and Non-Governmental Organizations involved in gender related issues in the sub-county were also interviewed to find out what they had done in promoting the new gender roles in households.

The study found out that many of the community members who had adopted new gender roles during the conflict period, especially the male, changed to their original ones. This created an impression that little was done to help these people uphold those new roles. It is recommended that all involved partners team up to play a practical complementary role of creating awareness, educating people about the benefits of the new roles they had adopted as well as forging out ways to bring about development. A partnership participatory framework is also proposed basing on what the respondents had submitted as suggestions. It is hoped this can promote and improve household gender relationships across generations hence development.

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**Dedication**

To my late parents, Mr. Ojuman Pampas and Achom Teddy; I will always remember you.

**Declaration**

I, Catherine Tino, confirm that the master thesis entitled: “*The impact of Karamojong-Iteso Ethnic conflict on household Relationships and gender roles, a case of Katakwi district, Uganda*” is my original work, which has not been submitted before to any institution for any academic award except as acknowledged in the text and reference list.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

TINO, Catherine

(Student)

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## **Abbreviations**

ACD	Armed Conflict Database
CBO	Community Based organization
CSO	Civil Society Organization
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
HPN	Humanitarian Practice Network
IDP	Internally Displaced People
KDLG	Katakwi District Local Government
LC	Local Council
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
NGO	Non-Governmental organization
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNWOMEN	United Nations Women
WB	World Bank
WHO	World Health Organization

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

In the aftermath of colonialism, increased migration and globalization, a multiplicity of ethnic and religious groups characterizes almost all countries of the world (Stavenhagen, 2016). Despite the fact that some multiethnic countries have succeeded in maintaining a great degree of peaceful co-existence, many countries have failed leading to ethnic/religious violence with its undesirable consequences in terms of loss of lives, loss of livelihoods, displacement of people, distressed families and breakdown of intercommunal relations and trust (Stavenhagen, 2016). Seldom, ethnic violence has escalated into guerilla warfare, terrorism and unending civil wars across various nation states (Rupesinghe, Sciarone & van de Goor, 2016). After the collapse of the Soviet Union that was followed by the independence of various new states after 1991, many countries that formerly were part of the federation of Yugoslavia descended into horrific civil wars and ethnic conflicts (Stavenhagen, 2016). Today, ethnic conflicts in countries like Sudan, Afghanistan and Iraq have had devastating costs and led to economic regress (Taras, & Ganguly, 2015).

Conflicts can be necessary for change in human society because they establish social relationships, group identity and cohesion, as well as being bases for redress of power imbalances in human society (Haley and May, 2007; Coser, 1956). However, they can also have negative consequences if not resolved. For instance, conflicts can result into destruction of infrastructure, threaten human security and break social cohesion (Zezeza, 2008). In the last 50 years, more than half of all nations have been affected by internal conflicts which worsened in the late 1980s and early 1990s (The World Bank, 2013). The global increase in the number of ethnic conflicts in recent decades demonstrates the continuing relevance of communal identities for contemporary politics (Cocodia, 2008).

Although conflicts have been on the international policy agenda for decades, linking gender, conflict and development was only incorporated in the international policy agendas in the mid-1990s. This was accelerated by the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and United Nations' (UN) Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security which both recognized the importance of women's equal participation and their full involvement in

promotion and maintenance of peace. Even then, understanding the interplay between conflict processes and gender roles remained a challenge.

Globally, developing countries are the most affected by violent conflicts, yet it is difficult to assess the effects of conflicts since the concerned institutions have inadequate infrastructure having little or no conflict related statistics and information (Stewart, 2016; World Bank, 2013). However, growing efforts to empirically document the impacts of conflicts show that there are more lasting effects on human capital than on physical capital; which implies that while economies may recover, the people who lose life cannot. Also, as is noted, death and destruction as human effects of conflict alter the structure and dynamics of households, their demographic profiles and traditional gender roles (World Bank, 2013). Further, men and women are affected and respond differently to conflicts (Bouta, Frerks & Bannon, 2005).

The Karamojong-Iteso conflict was exacerbated by competition for, access to and control over resources. And, the crashes due to the Karamojong cattle rustling culture, as well as the political unrest in the sub-region which enabled entry of small arms into the area have all had devastating impacts on local households (Bainomugisha, et al., 2007). This study builds on the existing knowledge to provide new findings on the impact of the ethnic conflicts on households especially, on gender relations and roles which can be used to mainstream policy formulation and implementation processes for balanced gender relations.

## **1.2 Statement of the research problem**

Ethnic conflicts wreck developments efforts as ethnic groups struggle for equality, resources, autonomy and/or recognition (Taras, & Ganguly, 2015). A study by the United Nations Research Institute in Social Development (UNRISD) on ethnic conflicts and development stated categorically that societies have faced serious problems in their development endeavors, or even major setbacks due to violent conflicts (Stavenhagen, 2016). This is because resources intended for development objectives have been diverted. Furthermore, conflicts have led to social and demographic displacements, human rights abuse and have greatly endangered national unity (Taras, & Ganguly, 2015).

The choice of topic and case study was motivated by the fact that most studies in the area, (Kandel, 2016; Laruni, 2015; Kandel, 2015; Davenport, 2011; Bainomugisha, Okello, and

Ngoya, 2007; Chapman and Kagaha, 2009; De Berry, 2000) have focused on the causes and the general impacts of conflict, as well as institutional conflict resolution mechanisms, but ignored the gender dimensions of ethnic conflict. This makes development actors (NGOs, civil society and government agencies) to have difficulties in translating social and developmental information into useful gender sensitive policies (Bouta, et al. 2005). A micro-level perspective of analysis was adopted for the study focusing on household level interactions that result from ethnic conflict.

### **1.3 Overall Objective**

The overall objective of the study was to examine the effect of the Karamojong-Iteso ethnic conflict on household relationships and gender roles.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

Using the Palam sub-country of Katakwi district as a case study, the study answered the following research questions:

1. What direct and indirect effects did the Karamojong-Iteso conflict have on the livelihoods of indigenous households?
2. How have households responded and adapted to the effects of conflict in terms of gender roles and relations?
3. To what extent do changes in gender roles and relations brought about by the conflict represent functional opportunities for change?
4. How can new and changed gender roles and relations be promoted for better relations between men and women in households?

### **1.5 Justification of Study**

Most states in the world are multi-ethnic but despite this diversity, many communities have remained peaceful while others have experienced devastating ethnic conflicts. Similarly, in Uganda some areas have remained peaceful while, for instance, the Teso region has gone through ethnic conflicts since 1950s (Isis-WICCE, 2002). Ethnic conflicts have been prominent globally leading to loss of lives, destruction of property and development setbacks especially in less developed countries of the world. This has impelled research and publication in the area of

conflicts and development exploring the impact of these conflicts on the overall development of an area.

Despite numerous studies on the Karamojong-Iteso conflict, such studies have largely focused on establishing the causes, household livelihood effects, as well as conflict resolution mechanisms. As such, there remain considerable gaps in knowledge that require further research. For instance, although various studies have established that ethnic conflict in the area have occasioned gender role changes (Bainomugisha, Okello, and Ngoya, 2007; Laruni, 2015), however very little is known regarding the extent to which such gender role changes represent functional opportunities for women in the study area.

Likewise, there is a dearth of scholarly knowledge with regards to how new and changed gender roles and relations can be promoted for better relations between men and women in households. Moreover, although there have been various attempts at conflict mitigation and recovery, such efforts have largely failed to investigate household adaptation and coping mechanisms during post-conflict in terms of gender roles and relations, that could inform mitigation and recovery efforts. This therefore, provides a valid justification to examine the impact of the Karamojong-Iteso ethnic conflict on household relationships and gender roles in Uganda. Further, this study provides fellow researchers and relevant policy makers with pertinent and new insights into the impact of ethnic conflicts on household relationships and gender roles in Uganda. The findings finally serve to inform policy reforms and options for consolidating new positive gender roles in post conflict situations.

## **1.6 Scope of the study**

Geographically, the study is limited to Katakwi district located in North Eastern Uganda focusing on Palam sub-county. This area has experienced this ethnic conflict leading to destruction of property and loss of lives. The study examined the impact of the Karamojong-Iteso ethnic conflict on household relationships and gender roles in Uganda. The underlying reason is to gain an in-depth understanding of the issues raised in the main objective and to answer the raised research questions.

## **1.7 Definition of concepts**

**Ethnic conflict:** This study adopted the definition by Ashutosh (2002) of ethnic conflicts as all those conflicts based on group identities such as race, language, religion, tribe or caste.

**Gender roles:** Gender roles as used in this study refer to occupations and behaviors considered appropriate for women and men in a particular culture.

**Household relations:** Household relations in this study denote the behavioral, psychological and social relations among various members of the family

**Direct Impacts:** Direct impacts are tangible and intangible impacts that affect the households' wellbeing or livelihoods directly.

**Indirect Impacts:** In this study, indirect impacts mean the tangible and intangible impacts, but those that do not directly affect the livelihoods of the households. Among those mentioned in the study include, psychological complications, long term derived illnesses, group and individual isolation, social and cultural disorders and spiritual complications among others.



## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This section presents a review of literature and theoretical framework on which analysis of the findings was based. It starts by explaining the concepts of ethnic group, ethnic conflicts and gender roles as key terminologies relevant to this thesis. This is followed by a review of literature on ethnic conflict with a focus on the general country view, down to Katakwi District where the study was conducted. It proceeds with a review of literature related to the impact of ethnic conflict on households, and household adaptive strategies to the impacts of conflict in terms of gender roles and relations. This is followed by a literature review of the extent to which the changes in gender roles and relations brought about by conflict are positive. In addition, literature on the extent to which the new gender roles can be promoted and consolidated for better relations in households in the post conflict period is reflected upon. And lastly, the theoretical framework for the study is presented.

### **2.2 The Concept of Ethnic Conflict**

When discussing the concepts of “ethnic group” and “ethnicity”, Barth (1969) cites the anthropological literature by Narrol (1964) which refers to an ethnic group as designating a population which is largely biologically self-perpetuating, shares fundamental cultural values realized in overt unity in cultural forms, makes up a field of communication and interaction and has a membership which identifies itself and is identified by others as constituting a category distinguishable from other categories of the same order. This definition supports the traditional proposition that “a race is equal to a culture which is equal to a language and that then, a society is equal to a unit that rejects or discriminates against others”. That what is common culture among the characteristics of ethnic groups occupies a central position because it is an implication or result rather than a definitional feature of ethnic group organization. It entails the nature of continuity of the units and the factors which determine the form of the units. It is therefore prudent that, to be classified as members of a given ethnic group, one must exhibit particular traits of the culture of that given group (Barth, 1969). According to Gellner (1964) as cited in Turton (1997), the term ethnicity in a more universal perspective can be described as "*the human*

*need to belong, to identify and hence also to exclude*". Turton (1997) however observes that this human need can be satisfied and expressed in many ways which may not be ethnic.

In effect, an ethnicity could be defined as a group of people with a common ancestry, belief system, language and culture, as well as a consciousness of belonging passed down from one generation to another through socialization (Tonah, 2007). From this definition, it is prudent that to be classified as a member of a given ethnic group, one must exhibit traits of the culture of that group. According to Croucher (2004), belonging to an ethnic group means being a certain kind of person portraying the cultural contents of ethnic dichotomies which are analytical of two orders. The first, are the overt signs which people look for to show identity and this may include dress, language or house form.

The second constitute basic value orientations, a claim to be judged or to judge oneself by the standards relevant to that identity. Therefore, identifying another person as a fellow member implies sharing criteria for evaluation and judgment and the dichotomization of others as strangers means recognition of limitations on shared understandings, differences in the criteria of judgment and restrictions of interactions. Ethnic conflict, therefore, is the result of cultural competition (incompatibility) of groups, driven by a sudden rise in awareness of identity against another ethnic group (Roessingh, 1996; as cited in Sotiropoulou, 2004).

### **2.3 Gender Roles**

Gender roles are occupations and behaviors considered appropriate for women and men in a particular culture. They constitute a culturally prescribed cluster of behavior and attitudes. Individuals act and interact according to the prescribed understanding of what is appropriate and expected of them. Therefore, with regard to gender roles males and females behave and interact in ways that conform to constellation of qualities understood to characterize them in their cultures (Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco, 2002).

Since they are rooted in the societal and cultural norms and standards which change over time and space, gender roles are not static or fixed. They change as the needs of society change. According to Wienclaw (2011), gender roles have changed over centuries with each succeeding generation creating different expectations for how men and women should act within society. The gender division of labor between men and women is not the same in all cultures. While

women care for fowl, small animals, or dairy animals in some societies, in others it is the men who take on such responsibilities (Wienclaw, 2011). Further, men and women are affected and respond differently to conflicts (Bouta et al., 2005).

## **2.4 The history of ethnic conflict in Uganda**

Uganda, like many Sub-Saharan African countries, has a history of ethnic conflict from pre-colonial, colonial into post-colonial era. Europeans came to Uganda at the time Uganda had kingdoms and chieftaincies, each with its ruler and administrative system. The Kingdom of Buganda became Uganda's principal Kingdom and was used by the British as a main ally. The British then colonized other kingdoms and the people of Buganda acted as tax collectors and labor recruiters from these kingdoms. The Baganda (the people of Buganda) attempted to conquer and force the Buganda culture on to other kingdoms but this led to resentment of Buganda by other kingdoms. After the British claimed Uganda as a protectorate, the social structure of the country was redefined and in the process favored certain groups over others. This worsened relationship between groups and the signing of the Buganda agreement of 1900 to establish an indirect British rule in Uganda further divided Ugandans along religious lines (Quinn, 2004).

In 1921 when the Legislative and Executive Councils were formed as new forms of governance by the British, Ugandans were not represented. This led to strikes in 1945 for the right to local representation. On 9th October 1962, a National Assembly was elected, and a semi-federal constitution drafted. When Uganda gained independence in 1962, leaders continued to pursue policies that further divided the population. For instance, the reigning government then abolished kingdoms in 1967 creating unrest in the country that was linked to ethnic and cultural backgrounds of different people. Uganda then experienced a series of coups from 1971 to 1986 when the current president, Yoweri Museveni, overthrew Obote's second government through the National Resistance Movement (NRM) (Quinn, 2004).

The history of ethnic conflicts still influences the current ethnic relationships. For instance, the conflict in Acholi land started after Museveni took over power. It was led by Joseph Kony and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) against the methods used by the NRM to consolidate their

control over Northern Uganda. The LRA claimed to fight to establish a government based on the Biblical Ten Commandments. Ethnicity continues to form the patterns of cohesion, division, and identification, and influences the legal, economic, and political experiences and pressures in Uganda. Ethnic groups, especially the pastoral communities like the Karamojong of North Eastern Uganda, have fought to maintain their traditional way of life (Edel, 1965).

## **2.5 The Impact of Ethnic Conflict on Households**

Research on household and conflict has in most cases focused on analysis of impact of conflict on groups of households. This neglects the socio-economic differences that determine entitlements and sharing of resources between groups. According to the World Bank (2013), conflict may not only lead to socio-economic disruption, but may also create new economic opportunities. That said, the immediate aftermath of violent clashes is often characterized by destruction of assets and livelihoods, displacement, and a breakdown in social order and cohesion (Norwegian Refugee Council, 2015; UNEP, 2013; Justino, 2011; Kindi, 2010). Nonetheless, it is worth noting that conflicts affect households differently, a result of their divergent vulnerability context. For purposes of this study, vulnerability is defined to mean the possibility and significance of being affected by events and processes that threaten the livelihood, security and wellbeing of households (Ellis, 2000). Thus, in the case of the Karamojong - Iteso ethnic conflict, the vulnerability context of households is determined through a focus on their livelihood and level of insecurity.

Ellis (2000) posits that livelihoods relate to assets, activities, and the access to resources that together determine the living conditions of individuals or households. Similarly, deducing from the above, the study conceptualized livelihood as comprising the ways in which households' access and organize assets or resources (physical, financial, social, natural and human) necessary for survival and pursuit of their long-term wellbeing, thereby reducing vulnerability to ethnic conflict in Katakwi district. In this section, the study critically reviews and discusses the findings of scholarly publications on the livelihood effects of ethnic conflict on households. This serves as background knowledge and will thus inform the findings of this study in relation to the Karamojong-Iteso ethnic conflict. Some of the key impacts are discussed here under.

### **2.5.1 Displacement and Migration**

Conflicts tend to lead to displacement of large population from the conflict scenes either to other countries or as internally displaced persons (IDPs) living in camps. The UNHCR Annual Global Trends Report (2015) estimated that globally the number of displaced people had risen to 59.5 million by the end of 2014 from 37.5 million a decade before. Up to 86% of the refugees and IDPs are from less developed regions and countries. In Asia, the number of refugees and displaced people stands at 9 million, while Sub-Saharan Africa has 3.7 million refugees and 11.4 million are internally displaced (UNHCR, 2015). During the Northern Uganda conflict, nearly 2 million people were internally displaced from 1996 to 2006 (UNHCR, 2012). The Karamojong-Iteso conflict in North Eastern Uganda sent about 100,000 Itesots to IDP camps in 2001 (Teso Initiative for Peace, n.d). However, there is little empirical evidence on the specific number of displaced households as most research has focused on collecting general event data based on counting numbers of refugees and internally displaced populations.

In terms of household livelihood, the situation of migrants or internally displaced persons and households is worsened in the absence of available store of resources or assets (human, financial, physical, natural and social) during and post-conflict. Justino (2009) particularly notes that education, financial and social capital could generate economic opportunities where migrants with desirable employable skills can sustain household livelihoods by finding jobs or creating enterprises with relative ease, compared to migrants with lower levels of education, training and/or financial capital. Moreover, Bujones et al (2013) point out the possibility where new settlements could prove hostile grounds due non-acceptance of migrant groups by host communities, as well as increased competition between indigenes and migrants over available resources. Thus, although migration often represents an immediate response following violent conflict, it does not always constitute a viable path to securing household livelihood during and post-conflict.

De Weijer (2013) postulates that in the absence of livelihood opportunities and migrant integration in new settlements, the likely outcome is that migrants return to their communities of origin. However, the decision to return home is often influenced by three main factors namely; the absence of security fears post-conflict, access to appropriated lands and properties, as well as

lingering social networks in their place of origin (USAID, 2012). That is, displaced households tend to be less willing to return to their communities of origin if security concerns remain or where individual or household resources, as well as structural and social networks for livelihood support are destroyed due to violent conflict.

### **2.5.2 Mortality and Morbidity**

Violent conflicts kill, injure and psychologically damage those from affected communities and displaced populations. Per the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), the number of conflict-related deaths globally rose to 176,000 in 2014, an increase from 113,000 in 2013. It is estimated that the Islamist insurgency in Nigeria claimed between 7,000 and 10,000 lives, and in Southern Sudan, in January 2014 alone, between 1000-10,000 people were killed (IISS, 2015).

It can be argued that, Uganda is not immune to killings as a result of internal conflicts. Ethnic conflicts in Uganda have intensified in the post-colonial period with about one million people killed between 1962 and 1986 (Quinn, 2004). Still in Uganda, the exact mortality figures in the Northern Uganda conflict are not well established. Further, the scanty facts do not show evidence on specific household mortality and are not gender disaggregated.

### **2.5.3 Loss and Destruction of Property and Assets**

During conflicts, households lose assets and property through plunder and sometimes the assets and property are destroyed through fighting and looting. These may include houses, land, labour, utensils, cattle, livestock and other productive assets. Displacement makes women and men to lose access to land and other assets and exposes them to greater risks as their knowledge base and coping mechanisms may not apply in host areas (Bouta et al., 2005). In the Kosovo conflict, half of the entire housing stock was damaged or destroyed; in Bosnia-Herzegovina, 60 percent of the homes were destroyed; in Sri Lanka, 50 percent of homes in the conflict areas were damaged (UNHCR, 2005).

During the Rwandan genocide, households suffered cattle raids (Verpooten, 2006). The militia (Hutu) also killed cattle for their consumption and to spread terror because cattle were a valuable asset and a symbol of power to the Tutsi (Verpooten, 2006). Uganda has also faced a series of such related incidences of loss of property and assets as a result of conflict. In the North-Eastern

region, households have lost cattle and other assets in the violent conflicts between Karamojongs and their neighbouring tribes (UNDP, 2005). The UNHCR notes that a combination of losses during conflict and breakdown of institutions are factors leading to high levels of homelessness and landlessness amongst vulnerable groups (UNHCR, 2005).

## **2.6 Household Adaptive and Coping Strategies in Terms of Gender Roles and Relations**

Acemoglu, Autor, and Lyle (2004) state that, individual or household adaptation or coping strategies adopted during or post violent conflict depends on its relationship to its environment. In this sense, adaptation could mean altering one's relationship to the environment, making it a more fitting place to live or making one fit to live in such an environment by taking advantage of limited or new resources or opportunities. Bujones, Jaskiewicz, Linakis and McGirr, M. (2013) echo similar sentiments by noting that human adaptation is accomplished by socio-cultural means by harnessing the new situations or opportunities. In terms of gender roles and relations, adaptation during conflict could thus mean altering structural norms that hitherto constrained or defined gender roles or participation to take advantage of emerging situations or opportunities during the conflict and post-conflict phase.

As Bouta et al., (2005) argue, household members often have to take up alternative activities for which they are under-equipped and untrained. There is altered traditional labour allocation and roles in families to secure adaptability and resilience (World Bank, 2013; Mazurana and Proctor, 2013). In Angola and Somalia conflicts, women bore the main financial burden of providing for the family while men took on responsibility for children and domestic chores. In Sudan, a shift from subsistence to an urban cash economy increased dependence on women's work in petty trade (El-Bushra, 2010). Much as there is evidence for altered gendered roles for households, adaptation based on the impacts of conflicts, reversal of gender roles is not accompanied by an ideological shift. And so, men experience more difficulty than women to adjust to new situations because cultural norms regarding the position of men in society sometimes make men resist adjustment to the consequences of conflict (El-Bushra, 2010). Thus, as a study in Rwanda revealed, while there were role changes in female headed households because of ethnic conflict, the roles of men in their households did not change (O'Connell, 2011).

## **2.7 Changes in Gender Roles, Relations and Functional Opportunities for Change**

Studies on perceptions of gender roles in conflict situations are relatively new (Schindler, 2010; Gabaccia, 1992; in Goldring, 1994). Sociologists have paid much attention to the pattern of adaptation and mechanisms for survival in a new culture, giving limited attention to how males and females perceive their gender roles before, during and after a conflict. Despite the devastating effects of the conflict on households, women have often used post-conflict periods to reshape societies, rewrite the rules, and advance women's rights, and changes in the perception of gender roles (Arostegui, 2013). Conflicts do also sometimes destroy oppressive patriarchal structures and create space for women greater autonomy and new roles (Calderon, Gáfaró, and Ibáñez, 2011; Bujura, 1999). Feminization of the informal sector in urban areas often occurs during conflict with women entering the sector more easily because it requires less education, training, and start-up capital. This situation sometimes continues to work after conflict. Women may therefore conceive this as a way of liberation and empowerment (Bouta et al., 2005).

Additionally, Bouta et al. (2005) argue that displacement often forces men and to a certain degree woman, to develop new skills and engage in new income-generating activities. Iranian immigrant women regard their immigration from Iran to the neighboring countries and European countries as a form of liberation from various restrictions imposed on them by cultural traditions and social customs (Mahdi, 2001). In Somalia and Angola, men have accepted their dependence on women passively and acknowledge that women's resourcefulness and industry have pulled families through crises (El-Bushra, 2010). Whereas before a conflict many more men than women are employed outside the home, unemployment during conflict undermines a key foundation of male identity and male perceptions of self-worth. Men see women's increased power in the households and their own disempowerment in different ways. The disempowerment of men as providers in households undermines their position and sometimes makes them respond to this impact with negative behaviors (Bouta et al., 2005).

A study conducted by Davenport (2011) in Northern Uganda after the LRA conflict revealed a desire to reclaim cultural identity by the Acholi people because the changes were perceived to have rendered children and women uncontrollable. Whereas many studies reveal that conflict



reshapes society positively, some observe that it only happens in individual cases, and with scattered and temporary gains (World Bank, 2013; El-Bushra, 2010).

## **2.8 Promoting New Gender Roles and Relations for Better relations in Households**

Sustaining the changes in gender roles as a result of conflict, especially the newly acquired skills by both men and women remains a major development challenge. There is a need to design adaptive programs built on women's and men's newly acquired skills that encourage them to continue in their new roles (Bouta et al. 2005). In support of the above, the UN Women (2007) calls for a positive engagement of national authorities, through participatory approaches to foster changed knowledge and actions by policy makers. In a bid to promote gender equality in the post conflict period in Sierra Leone, the state established and mandated the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs to implement and promote a national policy on gender equality in all government institutions (Castillejo, 2011).

However, there is a shortage of empirical evaluations on interventions aiming to challenge gender inequality and promote women's and men's newly acquired skills. El-Bushra (2003) and O'Connell (2011) argue that the ideological ground sustaining traditional gender relations look resistant to change and that interventions targeting to use the rapid changes to encourage transformations in gender relations may fail. This is evidenced by study after the Northern Uganda LRA conflict which found that the desire to return to old values acted as barriers for development policy makers and other partners (El-Bushra, 2003).

## **2.9 Theoretical Framework**

For this study, Kabeer's (2005) agency theory and DFID's sustainable livelihood approach are employed in examining the impact of the Karamojong-Iteso ethnic conflict on household relationships and gender roles. Specifically, agency theory proved useful in analyzing how changes in gender roles and relations could represent functional opportunities for change in the case of Karamojong-Iteso ethnic conflict. On the other hand, DFID's sustainable livelihood approach served as theoretical background with regards to the direct impacts of the Karamojong-

Iteso conflict on the livelihood as well as adaptation and recovery mechanisms following ethnic conflict in the study area.

### **2.9.1 Empowerment/Agency Theory**

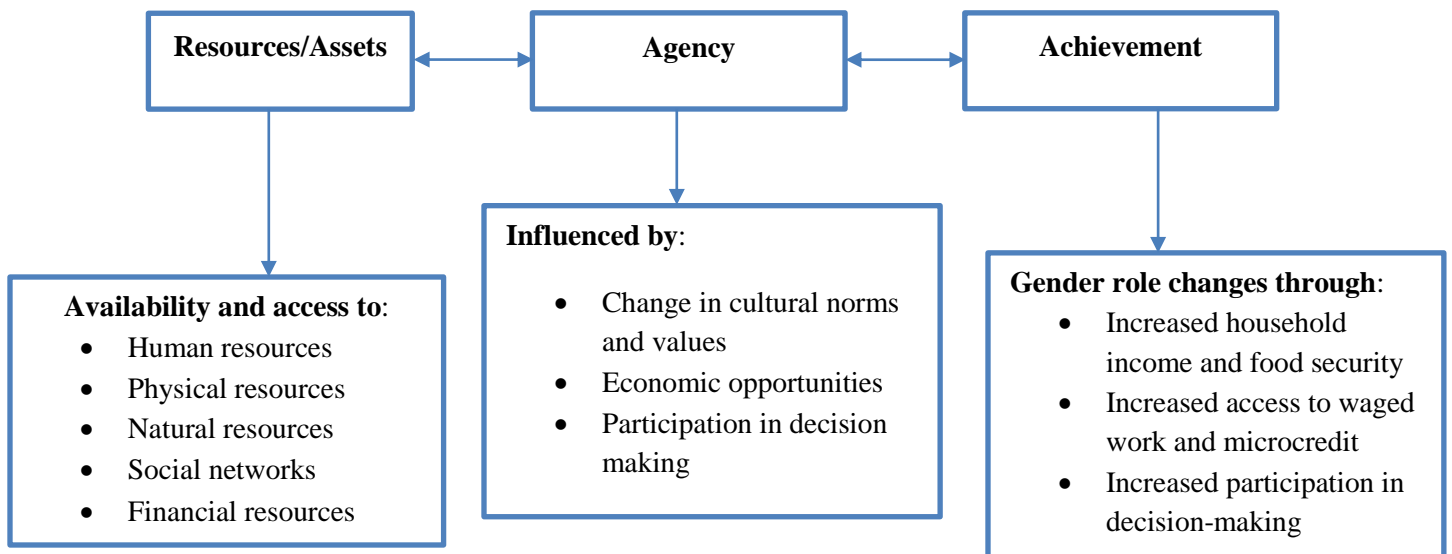
One way of thinking about empowerment is in terms of the ability to make choices. To be disempowered therefore implies to be denied choice. In analyzing how changes in gender roles and relations could represent functional opportunities post-conflict in Katakwi, the notion of choice is qualified in several ways. According to Kabeer (2005), the concept of choice necessarily suggests the possibility of alternatives, the ability to have chosen otherwise. However, in conflict contexts, there is often a logical association between poverty and disempowerment because an insufficiency of the means to meet one's daily needs often rules out the ability to exercise meaningful choice. Moreover, even in contexts where survival imperatives are no longer dominant, Kabeer (2000) further argues that not all choices may be relevant to the definition of empowerment. This implies that some choices have greater significance than others in terms of their consequences for household livelihood. It is therefore more fitting to define empowerment as the ability to make strategic life choice in a context where such ability was previously denied.

The ability to exercise strategic choices can be thought of in terms of three interrelated dimensions: resources (pre-conditions), agency (process), and achievements (outcomes). Resources not only constitute material assets in the more conventional economic sense, but also human knowledge and skills, as well as social networks (Kabeer, 2005). Access to resources often reflect the rules and norms governing distribution and exchange in different institutional contexts. Often, these rules and norms give certain actors authority over others in determining the principle of distribution or exchange of resources (Becker, 1997). Thus, where such rules are not gender biased or resource access restricted, it is possible for especially women to gain access to available household and community resources during violent conflict.

Agency, on the other hand, represents 'the processes by which choices are made and put into effect' (Kabeer, 2005: 14). In its positive sense, it refers to an individual or household's ability to make and act on their own life choices and act on them. However, there remains the possibility for certain actors to override the agency of others through mostly cultural norms, the exercise of authority, use of violence or other forms of coercion. Bellows and Miguel (2009) suggest cultural

or ideological norms may deny women the ability to make strategic choices through unequal access to education, land, economic opportunities, and participation in decision-making. This connotes the negative sense of agency. Thus, agency in relation to empowerment implies not only exercising choice but doing it in ways that confront prevailing power relations or cultural norms and values.

With regards to achievements, Kabeer (2005) defines it as the extent to which individuals and households can realize or fail to realize their potential through a combination of available and accessible resources and agency. In terms of empowerment, achievement is considered in terms of both the agency exercised and its consequences. Within the context of ethnic conflict, women having access to waged work, land and micro credit could signify progress in terms of women empowerment. However, Anderson and Eswaral (2009) argue that there is the tendency to associate increased economic engagement and access to resources by women as necessary only towards meeting household survival needs during violent outbreaks of conflict. In such a scenario, women empowerment as reflected in changes in gender roles and relations are limited to the conflict phase. The key therefore remains sustaining functional opportunities, which is necessary towards fulfilling women’s sense of empowerment post-conflict. The illustration is presented below.



**Figure 1: Illustration of theoretical application**  
(Source: Author’s construct)

Theoretically, Kabeer's (2005) agency theory is relevant for this study in several ways. First, the theory provides background knowledge regarding how women's household relationships are shaped by their access to resources during conflict. This is because prior to ethnic conflict between the Karamojong and Iteso groups, men were responsible for being household heads and as such, wielded decision-making powers at all levels such as in the use of land, money and other property, number of children to produce, as well as how many wives to marry. As such, the theory was useful in eliciting how socio-cultural barriers that hitherto prevented women's access to resources and agency gave way to their increased access and participation decision-making in both male and female-headed households. Moreover, Kabeer (2005) agency theory is useful towards establishing how access to resources could determine women's level of agency and the extent to which gender role changes could represent functional opportunities for change particularly in terms of women's sustained participation in economic roles and household decision-making.

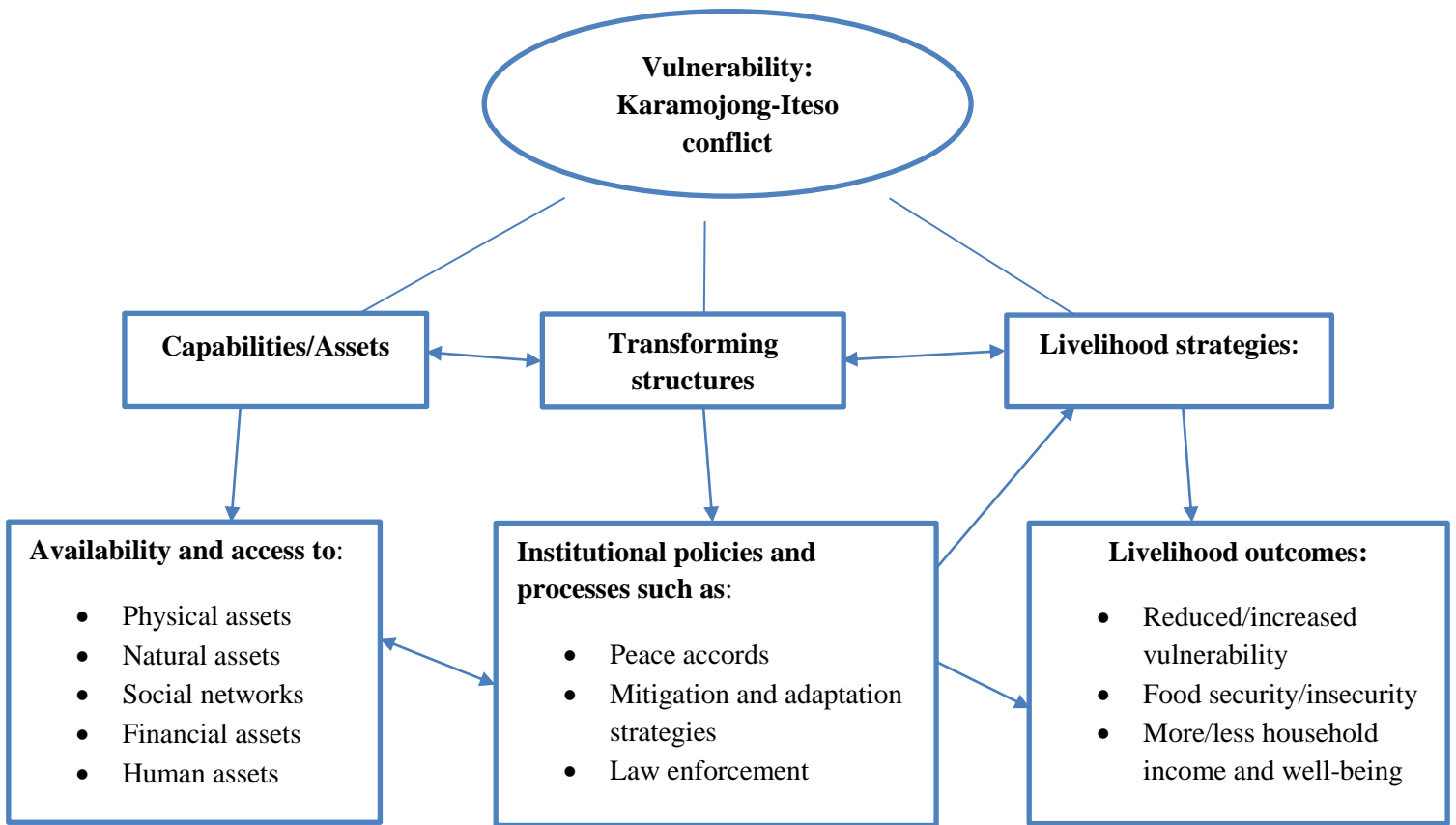
### **2.9.2 DFID's Sustainable Livelihood Approach**

Since the study also focuses on the household livelihood effects as well as adaptation and recovery mechanisms following ethnic conflict in Katakwi District, DFID's sustainable livelihood framework is adapted as a guiding framework for the study. The framework describes how sustainable livelihoods can be achieved through access to a range of livelihood resources which are combined in the pursuit of diverse livelihood strategies and outcomes. Kaag et al. (2004) noted that livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (availability and access) and activities required for a means of living. Thus, a livelihood is sustainable when it copes with and bounces back from stress and shocks such as ethnic conflict, maintain or enhance household resource base, towards providing livelihood opportunities and outcomes.

DFID's livelihood framework comprises five key components namely; vulnerability context, livelihood assets, processes, institution and policies (PIP), livelihood strategies and livelihood outcomes (DFID, 2000). In this study, vulnerability context constitutes violent conflict between the Karamojong and Iteso ethnic groups. Thus, the premise of this framework is that a combination of household assets, institutional policies and processes is vital in determining livelihood strategies available and subsequent outcomes. In this regard, human capital comprises the store of knowledge and skills, good health, and an active labour force to sustain production

and household livelihoods (DFID, 2000). The framework further defines social capital as community networks of resources through which a person can get help. This includes social relations, affiliations, and associations. Natural capital comprises both tangible factors such as land, water, forest, wildlife, soil and intangible factors such as atmospheric services and biodiversity. Physical capital includes basic infrastructure and producer goods required to support individual and household livelihoods. Financial capital comprises the financial resources such as income and access to credit which can be used by people to achieve the livelihoods they are striving for. Transforming structures and processes involve the institutions, organizations and policies that frame the livelihoods of people which exist at local regional and national levels. Kollmair and Gamper (2002) observe that, livelihood Strategies describe the activities that people do for a living including both farming and non- farm activities. It also looks at how the assets are combined to achieve the desired outcome. Finally, livelihood outcomes define progress or gains made from a combination of livelihood strategies which include improved incomes and reduced vulnerability (DFID, 2000).

The sustainable livelihood framework highlights some linkages among the various components, particularly related to ethnic conflict in Katakwi district. First off, the type of livelihood assets or resources and opportune structures available to households determine their level of vulnerability following conflict. Moreover, the availability and access to resources could influence subsequent conflict adaptation and recovery mechanisms adopted by households. Likewise, the existence of strong institutions as well as law enforcement could determine future occurrences of violent clashes. Such institutions and policies in turn create a conducive economic climate where households can access and combine resources in pursuit of livelihood strategies and outcomes. Finally, the type of livelihood assets, prevailing institutional policies and vulnerability scenarios influenced livelihood strategies that adopted by households in their pursuit of sustainable livelihood outcomes. It can therefore be argued that a synergistic relationship exists among the various components of the sustainable livelihood framework. This made DFID's approach suitable for this study because it enabled the researcher to assess whether the Karamojong-Iteso ethnic conflict created some vulnerabilities and how such vulnerabilities affected household livelihood assets, strategies and outcomes. The framework below is based on Kabear (2005) agency theory and DFID's sustainable livelihood approach.



**Figure 2: Illustration of theoretical application**

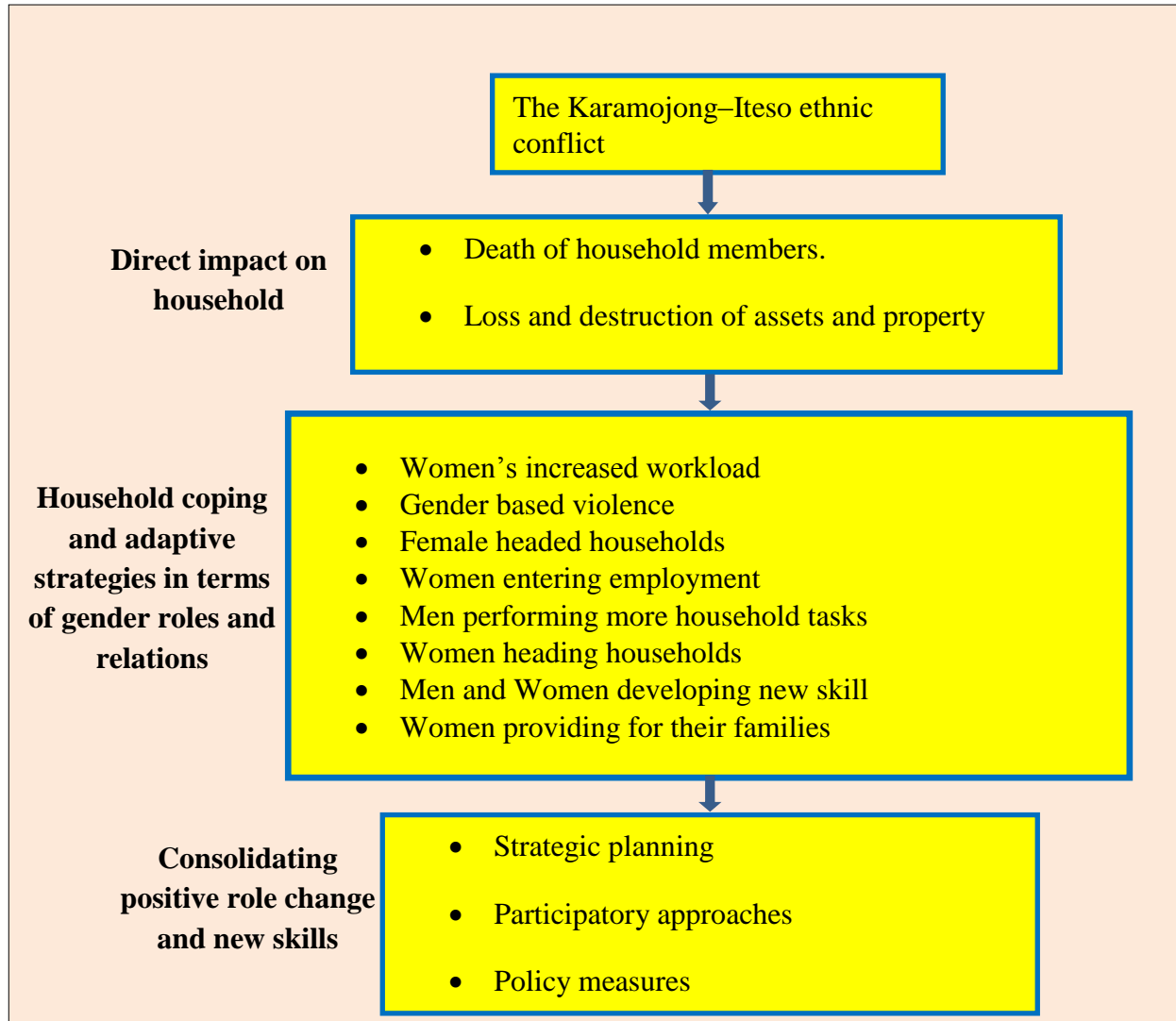
**(Source: Author’s construct)**

The illustration above highlights some linkages among the various components, particularly related to ethnic conflict in Katakwi district. First off, the type of livelihood assets or resources and opportune structures available to households determine their level of vulnerability following conflict. Moreover, the availability and access to resources could influence institutional effectiveness manifested in the form of peace accords, mitigation, adaptation and recovery strategies and law enforcement. This is because in a bid to guard their resources against destruction due to violent conflict, ethnic groups and households are more likely to abide by the tenets of their agreements or security arrangements. Put differently, the existence of strong institutional policies as well as law enforcement could determine future occurrences of violent clashes. Such institutions and policies in turn create a conducive economic climate where households can access and combine resources in pursuit of livelihood strategies and outcomes. Finally, the type of livelihood assets, prevailing institutional policies and vulnerability scenarios influenced livelihood strategies that adopted by households in their pursuit of sustainable

livelihood outcomes. It can therefore be argued that a synergistic relationship exists among the various components of the framework. This made DFID's approach suitable for this study because it enabled the researcher to assess whether the Karamojong-Iteso ethnic conflict created some vulnerabilities and how such vulnerabilities affected household livelihood assets, relations, strategies and outcomes.

### **2.10 The Conceptual framework**

The figure 3 above shows the direct impacts of the conflict on households as death of members of the household, loss and destruction of property and assets, and migration and displacement of people. Due to these impacts, household members devise coping and adaptive strategies among which are changes in gender roles and relations. For instance, the cases of increased workload for women, female-headed households, men performing more household tasks and others as shown in the figure above may be typical outcomes of ethnic conflicts. These changes in gender roles and relations sometimes continue into the post conflict phase but may be overshadowed by the culturally constructed roles. The engagement of government authorities and NGOs sometimes help to promote the newly acquire roles for better relations in the households in terms of strategic planning, devising policy measures and when the use of participatory approaches as seen above.



**Figure 3:Conceptual Framework**

**(Source: Author’s Construct)**



## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter describes the research methodology that was employed for this study. It consists of the research strategy, design, sampling methods and procedure, methods and tools for data collection and analysis, as well as limitations of the study. The methodology aimed at securing information on comparing gender roles in three different phases, in the traditional society before the people escaped to the camps; during their stay in the camps as IDPs; and after they returned back to their original place of living.

### **3.2 Overview of Study Area**

This sub-section presents background information of the study area and gives an overview on location and size, demographic information, geographical features and administrative units of Katakwi District.

#### **3.2.1 Location and Size**

Katakwi District is located in the North-Eastern region of Uganda, with a land area of 2,507 square kilometers and lies between longitudes 33° 48' E - 34° 18' E and latitudes 1° 38' N – 2° 20' N. The headquarters is situated about 435 km from Kampala, the national capital. Katakwi is bordered by Napak District in the north, Nakapiripirit District in the east, Amuria District in the West and North-West, Soroti District in the South west, Kumi and Ngora District in the south (Katakwi District Local Government, 2013).

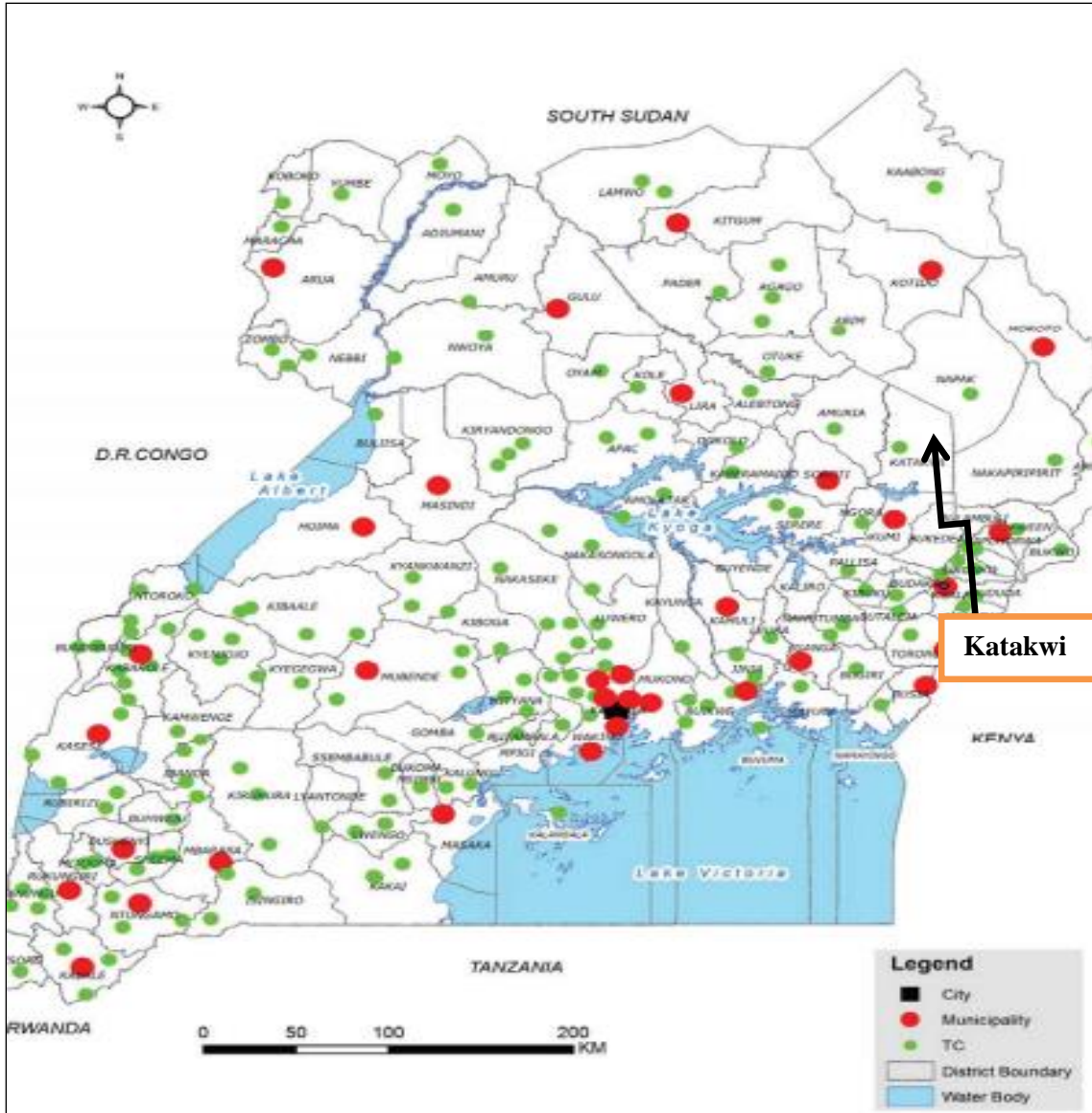
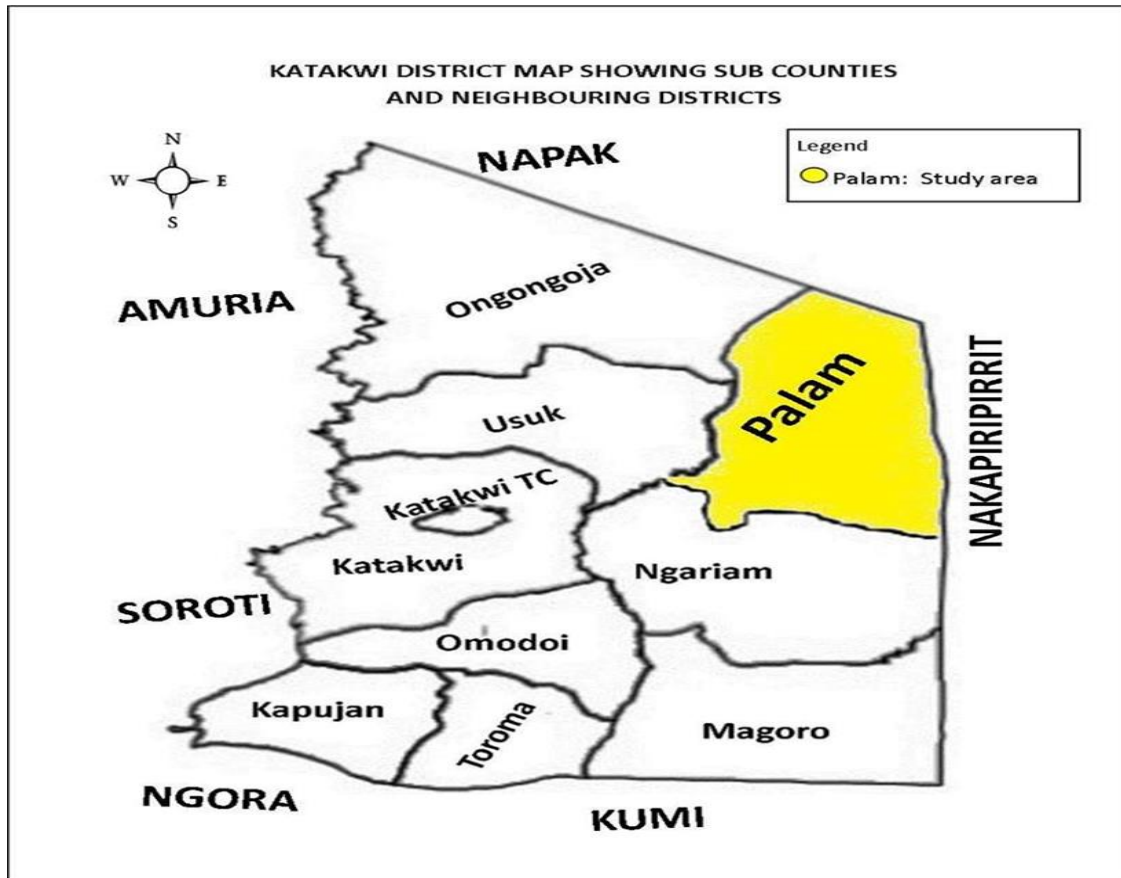


Figure 4: Map of Uganda showing location of Katakwi district

Source: UBOS, 2016



*Figure 5: Palam Sub-county*

(Adopted from: UNDP: 2014)

### 3.2.2 Demography

According to UBOS (2014), Katakwi District has a total population of 165,553 persons (80,845 males and 84,708 females), with an average annual growth rate of 2.76%. Of the total population, 6,947 inhabit the urban area, while 158,606 live in the rural area. The District has 31,308 households, with an average household size of 5.2. Most of the land along the Karamoja-Teso boarder is sparsely populated due to the violent cattle rustling incursions from the neighbours. Clustered settlements are mainly in the emerging rural growth centres as a result of petty trade while Katakwi town council has nucleated settlement (UNDP, 2014).

### **3.2.3 Geographical Features**

Katakwi geographical features comprise undulating plains with hills and inselbergs, rocky outcrop, rivers, forests as well as wetlands. The district landscape is generally a plateau with gently undulating slopes in some areas. The district lies approximately between 1,050 – 1,130 m above sea level. Dry land occupies 2,177 sq. km and open water area and swamps occupy 177 sq. km, land under cultivation is 720 sq. km, land under forest is 98.2 sq. km. and others occupying 53.5 sq. km. The District's climate is characterized by two seasons i.e. the wet season, which stretches from around March to around October, and the dry season, which starts from around November to around February. The mean annual rainfall varies from 1000mm to 1500mm (KDLG, 2013). The vegetation largely comprises of savannah grassland dotted with shrubs and trees with the major tree species being, acacia, combretum, Piliostigma, Butyrosperum, paradoxum and Hyperenia. The land resource is fertile and productive making agriculture the major economic activity in the District. However, farmers face a challenge of pests and diseases that affect their yields (KDLG, 2013).

### **3.3 Research Strategy**

According to Bryman (2012), a research strategy refers to a general orientation to the conduct of social research. He identifies two types; the quantitative and the qualitative. The former stresses quantification, while the latter stresses the use of words in the collection and analysis of data. Bryman emphasizes that the choice of a research strategy should be driven by the research questions; the method should correspond with the research questions at hand. This study employed a qualitative research strategy to understand the perceptions of the Palam Sub-County community regarding the impact of the Karamojong-Iteso conflict on the local households because this strategy can capture the sensitivity to how participants interpret their social world (Bryman 2012).

### **3.4 Research Design**

A research design is the criteria employed in the collection and analysis of data (Bryman, 2012). A case study research design was used in this study. The choice for this design was influenced by the fact that a case study involves a detailed understanding of a case and allows “seeing through the eyes of the people being studied” (Bryman 2012; p.68). The case study design was suitable

for accessing participants' experiences on the impact of the Karamojong-Iteso conflict on gender roles. Case studies also offer an opportunity to understand the attitudes and behaviors of respondents within their local setting.

### **3.5 Data Collection Methods**

This study used both primary and secondary data sources and used Focus Group Discussions, semi-structured interviews and document review to answer the research questions. The study involved conducting three FGDs as follows: the first one targeted elderly women who experienced all the phases of the conflict so as to understand if any changes in gender roles occurred. The women freely expressed themselves without any interference and fear of men; the second FDG involved both elderly women and men in order to triangulate the views given by elderly women. The participants were allowed to probe each other's reason for holding a certain view and for joint construction of meaning (Bryman, 2012); and, the third group consisted of the youth who had no experiences of the pre-conflict settings but, it was conducted to find out if the roles they played as IDPs during the conflict were still the ones they played at home by the time of the study.

Semi-structured interviews were used comprising several key questions that helped to solicit for information around the topic of study. It also allowed the interviewer and the interviewee to diverge from the interview structure in order to pursue an idea or response in deeper detail (Gill et al., 2008) Semi-structured interviews also allowed the researcher to observe and evaluate the respondent's non-verbal behavior such as facial expressions, voice projections and other gestures. During the study, 30 semi-structured interviews were conducted. The choice of both FGDs and semi-structured interviews was motivated by the fact that FDGs allow interviewers to get a wide range of information from participants who reinforce one another's views. But, because some of the participants could not comfortably reveal certain information in public, the individual in-depth interviews covered the gap by allowing the interviewer to probe deeply into social and personal matters (Bloom and Crabtree, 2006).

Document analysis was also used as secondary data source for the study. According to Bowen (2009), document analysis is a procedure for reviewing or evaluating both printed and electronic

material and such documents included background papers, books, journal articles, maps and chart, and program proposals in the area under study.

The FGDs and individual interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed as they helped the researcher to understand not just what people said but also the way they said it. Recording also allowed the interviewer to stay alert while following up interesting points made, prompt and probe where necessary rather than being sidetracked by getting down notes (Bryman, 2012).

### **3.6 Sampling**

Bryman (2012) notes the difficulty in knowing the number of respondents to include before theoretical saturation is achieved as that size varies from study to study. However, Warren (2002) and Morse (2004b) as cited in Bryman (2012) suggest that the sample size can be determined by the scope of study in a way that, the broader the scope, the bigger the sample. If the sample size is larger or less than needed, it poses both an ethical and scientific problem which affects the transferability of the results across contexts (Francis et al., 2010). For this matter, purposive, critical case and snowball sampling were used in this study.

Purposive sampling selects respondents with relevant experience to the topic (Bryman, 2012). In this regard, the respondents were selected based on their experience with the Karamojong-Iteso conflict, especially those who were displaced, had lost family members and whose livelihoods were disrupted as a result of the conflict.

In determining participants to be involved in the FGDs, critical case sampling was used to select a few important cases that contributed a great deal of information on knowledge development (Patton, 2001). As such, the selection of the groups was mostly based on the respondents (elderly women and men) who have had experiences in all the conflict phases in order to describe and explain the impacts of the conflict on the households, and in particular on the changes in gender roles throughout the three phases. These categories of respondents also helped to explain if there had been a desire to return to the old gender roles and values in the present situation after the conflict. The focus on the elderly respondents aimed at gauging the trend of events and comparisons of gender roles before and after the conflict to yield significant information for the study. But also, male and female respondents who had never experienced the

pre-conflict phase, the youth, were interviewed to describe and explain the factors that influenced their roles during the conflict. This category of interviewees also provided information on the possibility and challenges of returning to the former gender roles and relations in households.

Snowball sampling was used to identify households that were severely affected by the conflict as not all community members have experienced the conflict in the same way. Snowball sampling implies that contact with one household member from such households led to identification of members of other households with the same experiences. Local government officials and NGOs involved in gender related activities in the area were identified and interviewed. The purpose was to learn what they did to promote new skills acquired by men and women in the households, and the challenges faced while they performed new roles.

### **3.7 Data Analysis**

Qualitative Data Analysis is the process of using the data collected to explain, understand and interpret the people and situations investigated in a narrative manner (Russell and Gery, 2010). Grounded theory, thematic analysis, narrative analysis and critical discourse are the commonly used qualitative data analysis approaches (Bryman, 2012). This study used thematic analysis approach. The choice of approach was motivated by the fact that qualitative research generates a lot of data which requires proper reading of field notes and transcriptions. Thus, the construction of themes and sub-themes made it possible to sort and reduce the bulk data by eliminating repeated statements in the text.

### **3.8 Limitations and Challenges**

The sensitive nature of the topic made some groups among the community members in the study area hesitant to participate. However, this was to a large extent managed by assuring respondents of their anonymity, and also assuring them about the confidentiality of the study, and that the study was solely for academic purposes. A challenge for the study was the fact that the respondents were peasant farmers and cattle keepers who engaged in gardening activities as well as cattle rearing. This made them less accessible during the morning and early part of the day. This was managed by conducting afternoon sessions and by fixing appointments with the respondents prior to the different data collection sessions.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **4. Introduction**

This chapter presents data collected from the field using semi-structured interviews, FGDs and through document analysis. The data is presented and analyzed based on the research questions. The findings are based on the information collected from fifty (50) study participants. Demographic characteristics of the study participants are presented in the first section of this chapter. Where there is direct quotation, pseudo names are used to represent the study participants. This is intended to give a background for the reader of this report to understand the nature of the participants from which data was collected. Data is presented and discussed based on the research questions, but first is a description of the socio-economic characteristics of the study sample.

#### **4.1 Socio-economic characteristics of the Study Sample**

This study involved thirty (30) female and twenty (20) male participants. This gender disparity was because men are in most cases away from home preoccupied with the roles of looking after cattle and attending to shops while the female tend to stay at home executing domestic chores. The average respondent was 37 years old, but generally ranged from 19 to 71 years. Therefore, this age range is believed to have experienced the conflict and have considerable knowledge required for answering the research questions. About half of the participants described themselves as currently not married (single, divorced or widowed). The mean number of live children per household was 4.5. Only 14.1% of the participants had completed secondary education, 15% were in part-time employment, 75% were self-employed. Only 10% of the participants were in full-time employment. Up to 60% of the participants felt that they had insufficient financial income to provide for even the most basic needs (food, housing and clothing) while 30% felt they had just enough to provide for basic needs only. The rest of the participants were not sure of their ability to meet the basic household needs. Thus, findings generally indicated that the study population came from a socially deprived and disadvantaged section of the country's population.



Economically, the study revealed that the community mainly survived on subsistence agriculture engaging in both crop growing and animal husbandry. Generally, women carry the most burden as relates to workload, because on top of working on the farms and taking care of domestic chores, they have to meet the obligation of facilitating the financial needs of their spouses by engaging in extra income generating activities like making local brew. The uneducated youth also face socio-economic challenges which has led to high crime rates, domestic violence hence divorces, separation and disintegration of households which in turn influences gender roles and relations at both the household and community levels. All study participants claimed that, these challenges have a strong root with the social, political and economic unrests they have experienced especially the Karamajong-Iteso conflicts. The biggest alternative source of income that was revealed during the discussion is brewing local brew (*Ajon*). However, they noted that, this also indirectly increases other problems in the community like domestic violence and sicknesses among others when people consume a lot of this brew.

## **4.2 Impacts of the Karamajong-Iteso Conflict on the Livelihood of Local Households**

Respondents revealed several direct impacts including loss of lives, loss and destruction of property, displacement, famine and hunger, detestation/hatred, physical body injuries and impairments, community and household disintegrations, economic retardations, social unrest and mistrust among community members and cultural degeneration among others.

### **4.2.1 Direct Impacts of the Karamajong-Iteso Conflict**

In this subsection, the direct impacts of the Karamajong-Iteso ethnic conflict on the livelihoods of the people are presented and discussed. Conflicts worldwide impact human life, property and development in general, this conflict was not an exception.

#### **4.2.1.1 Loss of lives**

Over 90% of the respondents reported death of dear ones during the conflict. Adults reported loss of a spouse and children, while the youths reported to have lost parents, siblings as well as relatives. As a result, there are many widowers, widows and orphans. Reportedly, majority of those who died during the conflict were females. This probably may be a justification for the change of gender roles and responsibilities within the households. On the other hand, one may

ask, if a woman or man loses a spouse, who can get another one or re-marry easily? This question may also create a lot of arguments about the subsequent changes in the gender roles and responsibilities. As is argued by the World Bank (2013), in case of conflicts or insurgencies in the community or country, it is the female who are more affected than the male. As a female participant Amoti lamented:

*“...I lost my husband and my three sons during the attack aimed at stealing our cattle. I am now living and struggling alone with my daughters for survival and I couldn't leave them for another man who wanted to marry me. I knew they would suffer the more...”*

The above finding agrees with the assertion by the World Bank (World bank, 2013) that female suffer more during any insurgency. Thus, as was found in the study, many women faced more suffering throughout and after the Karamajong-Iteso conflict.

#### **4.2.1.2 Loss and Destruction of Property**

Respondents revealed that before the conflict, they had property in the form of cattle, houses, household materials and many others that helped in running daily lives, but lost almost everything in the conflict. Houses were broken down, others set ablaze, cows and goats looted as well as other material properties. Participants in FGDs claimed that this conflict affected them so much to the extent that losing their property and others being destroyed, affected their wellbeing. This is because the property was the source of living like land for the farmers who were displaced. Mr. Okello, one of the participants who was emotionally-moved and frustrated noted that:

*“...I had over 50 (fifty) heads of cattle and over 15 (fifteen) goats and sheep from which I could get income to educate my children and support my family. I lost everything helplessly during the conflict. They were all raided, my wife and elder daughter raped and killed, my home set ablaze and displaced to this area as a poor peasant. I can no longer take my children to school and help my family the way I used to...”*

As he revealed all that, many other participants in the FGD could not hold the anger and started grumbling in different tones while another woman dropped down tears. This is in line with UNDP (2005) finding that in the North-Eastern region, households have lost cattle and other assets in the violent Karamojong conflicts with their neighboring tribes.

#### **4.2.1.3 Displacement of people**

Participants said that there was too much pressure that many households could not sustain over social evils that forced them to leave their original settlements, hence, being displaced. Constant killings of people, raids of their cattle, burning of their houses, rape and others were some of the key drivers to displacement of different households. For example, Okello further revealed that:

*“... with all that happened to us as a family, I couldn’t wait for any worse thing to happen to me and my family. We had to relocate and that’s how we got displaced to this settlement area...”*

Participants lamented that before displacement they had vast pieces of land that were enough for grazing and crop farming, but were resettled on less than 5% of the initial holdings. This compounded challenges like famine and hunger, congestion and diseases. However, worth noting is the term “*Golden option*” which they referred to the option the government offered to resettle them from the insurgent areas to Katakwi District in Palam Sub-county. Denoting to this as a golden option implies that they were already fed up with the situation they were leaving in.

#### **4.2.1.4 Famine and Hunger**

During the FGDs, participants asserted that, during the conflict, food got stolen, there was no time for farming and cattle was raided, hence leaving them with no option of getting food, but laying their survival hopes at the mercy of humanitarian and relief organizations. Many households lived and suffered with famine and hunger for very long periods of time, translating into children getting malnourished, increasing the nutritional health deficiencies, and thus, accelerating rates of mortality and morbidity. This situation forced both men and women to involve in opposite gender roles and responsibilities. For example, women started engaging in commercial activities while men tended to gardens so as to earn a living for their families.

#### **4.2.1.5 Bodily injuries and deformities**

Six (6) of the participants fell victims to torture during the ethnic conflict, as it was evident that many had scars while others were still physically suffering from different body pains. One of the participants revealed that his elder son, while fighting with the cattle raiders, was shot in the thigh and it took him 4 (four) years to have the necessary health attention in form of operation, and is now he is a lame man. Related to that, evils deeds like rape, tortures, houses set blazing, fights and others, left the people with serious bodily injuries as well as deformities.

In their bemoaning narrative about the sustained body injuries, they listed loss and damage of limbs, visual impairment, loss of teeth, and hearing problems among others. They further stated that, physical body injuries and impairments constrained their ability to provide for their own families. Apio, a community leader during the interview exposed that;

*“...my brother in-law is one of the people who were affected by this conflict. His wife was raped and beaten to death because she refused to disclose the whereabouts of the husband and her son who had a week ago, fought with a group of Karamajong cattle raiders and killed one of them. From then, she experienced flow of blood and a lot of pain in her stomach, legs and back until she recently started to receive medical treatment from the regional government hospital...”*

Another female participant, Mary emphasized that because of the body and physical impairments they sustained as a result of the conflict, they were left disadvantaged and so, they could not easily cope with work and fairly compete with the host communities in order to recover economically. This has kept them poor and lacking.

#### **4.2.1.6 Community and household disintegrations**

Respondents revealed that during the conflict, communities were totally disintegrated as people scattered to different areas in pursuit of refuge away from the harsh situation. Not only were people displaced, but households also got broken down and until now, many families have still failed to re-unite. One of the respondents, Miss Akiru, who is a community leader recounts:

*“... Miss Awaru, during the conflict period, claims that it happened one day when she lost her mother and went to her home for mourning and burial. After that demising period I came back home to find relieve from the pain and only found no one, house burnt to ashes, crops cut down and nothing was left. My family had already vacated the area seeking asylum to an unknown place without any communication. I lost everything including the family and up to today I have not yet found all my family members but only one daughter who had run to her boyfriend during the attack and she got married. I am isolated, troubled and even failed to settle for marriage with any other man and now live a single, miserable and isolated life...”*

There was a consensus among study participants that disintegration of the community from the original society has also come up with a lot of negative implication. Besides losing their loved ones, relatives and friends, the social cultural context was also broken down to near zero. In the new settlements, displaced people adopted the social constructs of the host communities, thus, losing their original cultural values and beliefs. For example, Mr. Onene, a community leader noted that;

*“..... many of us were resettled in Palam sub-county but from different places across the region. Very few knew each other but majority of us had never met as we were operating in different societies and cultures. We have now embraced and adopted the values and the culture of the host community. Our culture and values are no longer effective and significant in this context since we cannot manipulate or influence the original cultures and norms of the natives of this area.....”*

Therefore, in reference to these findings, as the community and households were fragmented, it did not only stop at that, but also affected the social cultural constructs or values of these victims of the Karamajong-Iteso conflict. Therefore, the social cultural values being affected implied that they did not leave the social and household gender roles and responsibilities as they were before. This is because issues that concern society changes affect society members at all levels ranging from individually to communally. Teso Initiative for Peace report, (n.d) estimates that the

Karamojong-Iteso conflict sentenced about 100,000 Iteso to IDP camps in 2001. In the same report above, it is postulated that, this did not only cause displacements but also directly affected the social cultural norms and values of the migrants or resettled people as well as the host communities.

#### **4.2.1.7 Economic regression**

Participants argued that this conflict greatly impacted on their economic wellbeing as individuals as well as a community. Many claimed that before they were resettled to Palam sub-county, they had vast pieces of land on which they were practicing farming from that they could make a living off. Others groaned that they had property like cattle from which their economic survival was sourced across seasons. They however lost the land and other valuable economic assets or property like cattle during the conflict. On the other hand, Mr. Okiru claimed that they shifted to new places which were economically focused on other crops and businesses that they did not know how to operate. It was so hard for them to cope up with the new economic environments. However, participants also lamented that in many families, especially the women headed households, there are many challenges they face that affect their economic wellbeing as Mary had this to say;

*“... our local communities, cultures and values predetermined us (women) to be dependents on the men. This has made many women lazy, and those who struggle to work are often regarded as out-casts in the community even by fellow women. This, many times has limited us from getting jobs or even looking for money to sustain families as women even when men do no longer take their responsibility as due...”*

This indicates that women have a very big role to play economically within this community that has been directly affected by the Karamajong-Iteso conflict. However, their perception and the perception of the community they are living in have highly limited them from pursuing economic benefits. This has kept women poorer, dependent and less empowered especially in decision making aspects.

Related to this finding, according to El-Bushra (2010), in Angola and Somalia conflicts, women bore the main financial burden of providing for the family while men took on responsibility for attending to children and domestic chores. He also added that, in Sudan, a shift from subsistence to an urban cash economy increased dependence on women's work in petty trade. This is in agreement with the findings of this study as women have taken on financial burdens especially the widows and single mothers. However, they still have a perception problem among themselves as well as the communities in which they operate currently and those they lived in before. Thus, there has been a shift in the gender roles and responsibilities for both men and women in the Palam community.

#### **4.2.1.8 Social unrest and mistrust among community members**

It was also revealed by the study participants that though they no longer experience the conflict situation, they are still facing social unrests and mistrusts within the host community. This is because of the differences in the cultures, values and beliefs. Participants disclosed that, they are living a very hard life with limited land for farming and grazing, thus leading them into encroaching on other people's pieces of land which in turn causes more conflicts in the community. Others resort to theft and other petty crimes which angers the host community. This has caused many clashes between the host community and the migrant community breeding suspicion and mistrust within the community.

#### **4.2.2 Indirect Impacts of the conflict**

##### **4.2.2.1 Psychological problems**

According to Zeleza (2008), one of the key impacts of conflicts on the involved people is the psychological complications due to stress, torture, long suffering and experiencing of disturbing or overwhelming negative situations among others. These may affect one's behavior by activating the adoption of maladaptive behaviors like fear, mental illness, having nightmares and general body weakness, loss of appetite, loss of weight, anxiety, hormonal imbalances and many others. These psychological complications are indirect in that you cannot easily identify them, and they cannot easily go away with physical attention like medical attention but rather indirect interventions like counseling.

During different sessions, respondents agreed that, many of their colleagues who faced the wraths of this conflict, did accumulate psychological problems and with others still struggling to recover up to now. Revealing scenarios where women witnessed inhumane acts like rape, brutal killings of their family members, being beaten and disappearances of their family members which has greatly affected their lives psychologically. In relation to this finding, Deaux and Major (1987) contends that, during wars and other devastating situations, women are more affected than men and their psychological ability to resist and sustain or cope up with those situations is lower as compared to that of men. This implies that women are the main victims of psychological problems which arise out of conflicts. This is evident in what one of the male participants Mr. Onek revealed;

*“...During the attacks, my wife witnessed the attackers torturing her young twins to death and since then, she refuses to produce any other child in fear of what happened claiming that the same might happen again. She at times cries while in deep sleep meaning she is experiencing nightmares....”*

In addition, all participants in the FGDs shared own experiences that they have been struggling with since the conflict time which were related to psychological disorders. For example, one male participant Mr Ewiku while sharing his experience, another member asked him whether he can go back to his ancestral land in case there is an opportunity; he denounced and said he will never go back to that place unless he is dead. This implies that he developed strongly rooted fear and anxiety disorders. Therefore, unless these people are helped through counseling, they may never have peace of mind at any time in life.

And as noted above, the factor of women being at higher risk of experiencing psychological problems resulting from conflicts, this also may affect their daily operations as they pursue their different gender roles and responsibilities at all levels. This can be justified by the above testimony of a male participant who claimed that his wife refused to produce children again, though the husband wanted to. In further probing Mr Onek, he answered in the affirmative that he later married another woman who produced him more children something that he initially did not want to do. This was a clear indication that, this conflict had far reaching negative impacts



on the gender aspects of the community and individuals as was manifested in the psychological problems.

#### **4.2.2.2 Long term derived illnesses**

Participants also revealed that after the conflict, they developed a host of indirect illnesses and health problems. They claimed that they had developed high blood pressure, heart problems and muscular weaknesses. They narrated that such was due to the fear and traumatic life they lived for a long period. Others claim that their spiritual ancestors are not happy with them since they left their ancestral land. Looking through this kind of impact, many participants agreed that they can no longer function the way they used to, like in working to support their households. This implies that for example, if men are the ones experiencing such illnesses, their wives had to take over the responsibilities of providing for the family. This is testament of change in gender roles and responsibility among men and women. One of the participants, Anite revealed that, her husband was currently suffering from high blood pressure, and also had been attacked by ancestral spirits claiming that he should go back to his ancestral home to serve and appease them. In this situation, the husband cannot work, thus, the woman goes to look for money as the man remains home to care for the children, hence, a shift in gender roles due to the conflicts.

The direct and indirect impacts of the Karamojong-Iteso conflict have had a toll on the livelihood and sustainable development of the Ateso community. A livelihood is sustainable when it copes with and bounces back from stress and shocks such as ethnic conflict, maintain or enhance household resource base, towards providing livelihood opportunities and outcomes (DFID, 2000). Most households in the affected communities have failed to get back to their previous state due to stress and shock brought about by the conflict. Also, because people kept moving from the affected area due to fear and violence, they could not settle down to focus on project that could lead to their sustainable development. Destruction of property also led to development setbacks in the area. The conflict has increased the vulnerability of the people of Teso and Palam sub-county in particular to poverty and suffering.

### **4.3 Responses and adaptations to the impacts of the conflict in terms of gender roles and relations**

This section presents household response and adaptive measures to the impacts of the conflict in terms of gender roles and relations. Household relationships before the conflict in relation to the responses after the conflict period are elucidated. The section further explains the adaptive measures to the impacts of conflict in terms of gender roles and relations. Both males and females among the local community before the Karamajong-Iteso conflict had their well-defined gender roles and responsibilities. However, they were bound to changes after the conflict as reflected below.

#### **4.3.1 Gender Roles and Responsibilities before the Conflict**

Both the male and the female participants contended that, men were responsible for heading the households and making the major decisions at all levels (like use of land, money and other property, number of children to produce as well as how many wives to marry). Men were the owners of household property and were in charge of deciding what happens in the family. As Kabeer (2005) notes, access to resources often reflects the rules and norms governing distribution and exchange in different institutional contexts. These norms often put one sex at a disadvantage and in most cases, women are the unprivileged in this sense. Similarly, meeting the financial needs of the family, ensuring protection of household members, representing their spouses (talking on their behalf), as well as handling issues that the woman or wife has failed to resolve rested on men before the conflict.

Looking deeper through different roles, women revealed that in the period before the conflict, men were the de facto heads of households. Even when the husband died, his brother took over the reins and it was taboo for a woman to head any institution in the community. Related to that, men were the only ones conferred with the rights to make decisions in the households and the community. Women's views were usually disregarded by men and taken to be not relevant and often seen as misleading. This situation disempowered women and made them more dependent on men, thus, making them full subjects to men. This subsequently made men more powerful and proud hence looking at women as the weaker sex in the community in all aspects.

Related to the above, men being representatives of women, implied that women were not granted any chance to express themselves in any way unless the man or husband had approved. The study participants also acknowledged that, women's roles were; taking care of children, working in the gardens, thatching houses, nursing the sick as well as executing all the domestic work. Similarly, these roles were also the same for the girls in the family as they were expected to work directly with their mothers. This made women voiceless, marginalized, violated and deprived of their rights, ending up being battered and mistreated by men, subjected to domestic violence, denied voicing against child marriage and many others social evils. Therefore, the culture of the Iteso, has always had a very big contribution towards determining the roles and responsibilities of both men and women and the way of conduct for both sexes. However, it should also be noted that, about 70% of the study participants concurred that religion and society also had some significant contribution that cannot be undermined.

#### **4.3.2 Gender Roles and Responsibilities after the Conflict**

After the conflict, very many things changed due to the drastic impacts that came up with it. As people and communities were getting displaced, resettled, families and households disintegrating, loss of property and lives during and after the conflict, culture and the social constructs of the individuals and the Iteso community got weathered. It was therefore inevitable that gender roles and responsibilities of both the men and the women had to change. It was observed by the participants that compared to the previous (before the conflict) gender roles and responsibilities and the current (after the conflict) ones, that there is a very momentous change and difference. Mostly women asserted that, many of these changes happened in their favor though to a certain extent, the men cannot still accept the new changes.

Ms. Ayeko, one of the respondents had this to say:

*“...for those women who have husbands, there could be some roles that they play. When I was still with my husband, I used to do almost everything concerning housework and his role was to just eat ready food for which he does not even know where it has come from. In my own opinion, men and women can do everything but men just want to be men and they enjoy being served by*

*women. ....as I said earlier, there are only a few roles and responsibilities that are not cross-cutting tha all can do like sex roles, but majority of them, men can do them as women do for example cooking, nurturing children and, farming ...”*

In response to the above, another male participant Mr. Obina said:

*“...The household roles and responsibilities were already determined by the elders a long time ago and our role is to follow those rules. Women’s role is to take care of the young ones and kitchen work; and it is not proper for me to fight over her roles in her department...”*

This means that as gender roles and responsibilities changed, little was observed in the community. It was found that it was mainly women’s roles and responsibilities that crossed to those that were previously assigned to men. They all agreed that women today involve in productive work like doing business, providing financial support to the family especially educating and clothing children. On the other hand, men could have also assumed and shared roles like doing domestic work, working in the gardens and thatching houses but they do not. This is in line with what is stated above when a male participant counteracted the woman participant. Therefore, it is true that roles and responsibilities changed to a certain extent but the changes had little effect to men. But, such roles kept the women more oppressed, overworked and drained though they did not have any opportunity to decide over anything unless they were single mothers like the widows.

It was noted that, the only context in which gender roles and responsibilities changed, was within single headed households like for widows, who now take decisions for their families without external influence from the men’s family. There are also some households which are led by single men or widowers and, in these men play double roles as men as well as women within that household. This runs in support for what Ms. Harriet (Not real name) noted that, “.... *men and women can do everything, but men just want to be men and they enjoy being served by women....*” This finding is consistent with what Chafetz and Hagan (1996) notes, that gender roles are not static or fixed, they change as the needs of society change. In addition, Wienclaw (2011, p.33) also asserts that, gender roles have changed over centuries and in recent times with

each succeeding generation creating different expectations for how men and women should act within society. However, these scholars undermined the reality that, the context through which these roles change also matters. For example, such is common in the Itesot community where the gender roles are strongly traditionally rooted.

### **4.3.3 The ‘Adopted’ Gender Roles**

As reflected above, both men and women adopted some new gender roles and responsibilities during and after the conflict. Women, mostly those who lost their husbands (widows) during the conflict, were forced by circumstances to become household heads, making decisions for the family, provide security for the household, providing health care, working to meet and provide financial needs among others. Men also adopted roles of working on the farm, grazing cattle and doing domestic work as their spouses have gone to do productive work like starting petty businesses in markets, digging on people’s farms and selling local brew among others. A male participant Mr. Okiku revealed that; “... *I learnt to take care of children and cook when life became very hard and my wife had to begin doing petty businesses like brewing and selling vegetables in the market...*”

Another male participant Mr. Obuwa revealed that; “.... *the truth my daughter is that, while in the camp, there were no division of roles, even myself I used to cook, wash and take care of children, while my wife tried to do some business to meet the financial demand of our household.*”

This implies that at a certain level, both men and women had no distinctly spelt out roles and responsibilities especially during the conflict and the camp settlement period. However, as seen above, as men’s roles changed, so did the women’s roles cross-cut that of the men. Whereas it was also reported that men have a bigger chance to take back their previous position in society, since many men went on to marry new women who went on to reclaim the roles men had taken over. Unlike their male counterparts, nearly all women’s newly adopted roles could not change, and they have continued with them until now like involving in petty business to provide financial needs of the household. This finding is related to the contention by the agency theory that during violent conflicts, women tend to engage in activities aimed at meeting the survival needs of the household or family (Kabeer, 2005). It is therefore crucial that such women are

empowered to continue engaging in such economic to increase the income base of the household even after the conflict. This empowerment can be in form of trainings and workshops, financial support in form of small loans and capacity building.

Majority of the participants agreed that life was not the same as it was at home before the conflict when they lived in their ancestral land. They confided that, there was not enough food, shelter and other family needs thus, they had to do anything to make ends meet. From the above view point, it is clear that what influenced the changes in gender roles and responsibilities among men and women after the Kramajong-Iteso conflict was not a single factor. Many things worked together to cause the changes as reflected above. However, it should be noted that due to the changes, people were affected either positively or negatively at community level as well as individual levels. Nevertheless, though much happened in favor of the women, still, again much happened not in their favor. For example, as they lost husbands in the struggle, more workload and responsibilities arose when they (women) became household-heads without help from the dispersed family members, among others. In this context, many women could not get married again but the men were more flexible to marry again. The women became the bread winners of the families/households hence increasing their workload and changing or transferring role to them that were formerly for men.

In an in-depth discussion with the study participants, it was revealed that while many gender roles were adopted by men and women during and after the conflict, only around 30 percent were still practiced. The main reason for transfer back to the original gender roles was that, after a period when they were settled in the resettlement area, men started to struggle to regain their status as men both in society as well as in households. Those who had separated or lost their wives and had assumed the opposite roles, decided to marry again so that they can transfer back the roles they had adopted to the women whom they believed were the ones to perform such roles. One of the participants Mr. Okwi revealed that;

*“...I could not continue to do all the domestic work at home because the community was looking at me as half man. So, I had to marry another wife to replace the one I lost during the Karamajong attack....”*

One may ask, did Mr. Okwi marry a house helper or a wife? Wouldn't this happen that he takes his wife as a property in his custody and end up oppressing her with heavy workloads without helping or supporting her? Isn't this new married woman going to be made a slave? However, before answering all those questions, one should not swiftly judge and condemn Mr. Okwi because in his statement, he claims that it is the community that he felt was looking at him as a half man that he had a point to make to

However, one may blame the community because it is made up of people including him and if anything can change in the community, he must directly participate in bringing about the change. Therefore, it is Mr. Okwi to be blamed. On the other side, wouldn't Mr. Okwi have been ignorant about gender issues? And indeed, it may not be fair to judge someone of the kind. Thus, amidst all those claims and questions, the participants agreed to apportion the blame onto the culture as well as Mr. Okwi for not being considerate.

Other male participants claimed that they now have grown up children who can help in doing chores like cooking, and other domestic work. For the women, assertions were that they had no option but only to do what their culture demands them to fulfill. One of the participating women said that:

*“...we lost everything including the cattle and land. My husband's role was to look after the cattle and cultivate crops for selling. Currently he has no job and I had to look for what to do to sustain the family that's why I am brewing and selling local brew. My husband cannot help me in my business because he feels it is mine and he is also not any more helping with the domestic work like caring for the children, fetching water, prepare food, extra. Therefore, I have to do it all with or without the help of any person because it is my responsibility as a woman to see my family happy.”*

This infers that not only were the majority of those who changed back to their original gender roles women, but so did they retain their adopted roles, thus, creating a heavier workload for women at the expense of the men. on the other side of the minority who remained practicing the adopted gender roles, the participants supported the practice with different reasons. Majority of

these minorities were women who had lost husbands and they had many children they could not abandon. So, they have to play double roles of father as well as mother at the same time. However, women participants revealed that there are also some few men who are understanding and supportive and they are not influenced by the cultural assertions and practices as well as the specified gender roles.

Also, to note are some of the reasons that participants gave to defend their reverting back to the original gender roles whereby most of these were men. Among the claims were; “.... *I have grown up children who can help where there is need, and I have my traditional roles as a man.....*”; “.....*Because we got back to our ancestral land where we grew food and reared some animals, I am now back to my original role as I used to do before the conflict started and we were displaced.....*”. Therefore, this means that most men had to change from the newly adopted gender roles back to the original gender roles, by giving reasons that justified their actions to change to the original status.

Both men and women participants revealed that while taking on the new roles, they were faced with a host of challenges. One of the was getting so tired due to the heavy workload, being laughed at and mocked by other community members for doing roles they perceived to be for the opposite sex. Women claim to have had quarrels and sometimes fought with their husbands on issues of roles. Hence, majority resolved to be women (the ones that are submissive to their husbands as the community expects) and even now when they do their business and sell different products like Ajon (local brew) and farm products, they hand over all the money to husbands to decide on how to spend it. Men also revealed that they lacked land for grazing and farming while in the camp which is their mandatory role especially when it comes to income generation. This made them to devise ways of changing back to their original roles.

#### **4.3.4 Institutional support in improving relationships during adoption of new roles**

The study participants agreed that, they all received some institutional support from government units, non-governmental and civil society organizations as well as community based organizations. From the government, the district and sub-county community development officers organized trainings to help them adopt different economic opportunities within the area



so that they can earn a living to sustain their lives. Also from the health units, information sessions were organized to mainly make the men understand the benefits of making a joint contribution towards caring for the children. They also revealed that police in partnership with organizations like FIDA (Federation of International Women Lawyers), MIFUMI local organization and others, organized community policing sessions in which they shared with them legal issues and how they should conduct themselves so that they do not become victims of the law. In addition to the above, women participants asserted that, through community policing sessions, domestic and sexual based violence were key issues, and to a certain extent, it helped in reducing the domestic violence and sexual based ills within the community and in the households as well. Thus, helped them adopt different roles within the household and the community.

#### **4.3.5 Way forward to foster improved household relations**

In focus group discussions, study participants agreed that one of the strategies institutions can use to improve the new relationships within the household and community is through training and seminars. One of the study participants Ms. Apisa revealed that:

*“... when police organized a seminar on roles and duties of citizens and for the migrants, we learnt a lot and since then, we realized our position in the host community, our rights as well as obligations. We started freely fitting within the community and this built our confidence irrespective of our migrant status.....”*

They opined that, as they uphold the new roles and responsibilities especially in their households, they need guidance which they cannot get from themselves but through seminars and trainings. They specifically called for training in income generation so that they can manage to provide for their families, a seminar on domestic violence and human rights and many others. This may help them to easily cope with the new roles, for example, women who are single parents and must meet all the needs of their families. Training in income generation can be significant to help them gain skills to help them succeed in their business adventures. In addition to the above, they also agreed that within their community, there are many victims of torture who became physically deformed who need life skills to help them live and cope up with these new roles.

The other strategy proposed by the study participants towards improving on the newly adopted roles was the inclusion strategy. In this, they argued that, as institutions endeavor to help them in different coping ways, the community members should be fully involved and made to be at the center of the activities. They revealed that, many institutions come up with many good projects to their community which fail to deliver expected results because the community members are not actively involved in the process. They asserted that if they are involved, it is easy for them to own and defend the project than when it is just imposed on them. This implies that they are advocating for more of bottom-bottom or bottom-up approaches of community development.

On the other hand, women strongly asserted that they are the biggest number of those who have adopted new roles in their households. Instead, when any initiative comes up, the institutions involve the men mostly and women are taken as minors. Therefore, they plead that at all levels, as institutions struggle to improve on the new gender roles in the households and community, both men and women should be involved equally. The other argument brought on board was that men are still the dominant sex in the community as well as the households. But, when they organize sessions like on family planning, women rights and others, little effort is taken to involve the men hence they are still very influential in determining issues in the household as well as the community. Therefore, it was them agreed that at all levels where women are concerned and there is need to involve men, an initiative should be taken to mobilize men to be part of the processes so that they also make their inputs. It was agreed that, if this inclusion strategy is embraced, the community as well as the households will swim in peace, agreement, prosperity as well as unity without any exclusions.

Information sessions were also another proposal by the study participants to be embraced towards improving on the new relationships in the community. As migrants in a new community, with new adopted roles and responsibilities both within the community and the households, there are many aspects that they need to be made certain and convinced of. This can be through providing information from the different operating institutions. Institutions like police, human rights activist institutions, community development and transformation institutions, schools as well as government institutions have a vast set of information that the community needs, and they cannot access it or even know how to access it unless information sessions are organized. For example, one of the women participants Ms. Kadodi narrated that;

*“... we have many young boys mainly in the community who have failed to go to school and do not want to work. They break the law by engaging in illegal activities like drug abuse, defilement, and theft among others. If we have opportunities for different institutions to give information to the community and the youths about different aspects of life, our children will gradually change for a better community and happy households...”*

This implies that although information sessions have been organized within the community, they have rarely handled youth problems. This is resulting into threats for the next generation as well as sustainability of the community. Therefore, these information sessions can be used as tools for raising awareness among the youths within the community, thus, a move towards creating a secure future promising generation for the households as well as the community at large.

The study participants also proposed for partnerships of these institutions in offering services. They claim that all institutions within their community are acting independent and autonomous which is okay. However, in many aspects, there is need for partnership during service delivery. Police should partner with other CSOs and CBOs which are more rooted in the community for information sharing and community mobilization. CBOs, CSOs/NGOs, police and other institutions in the area that are working towards improving the gender relationships within the households, should heavily work with the traditional institutions in the community. The participants agreed that institutions like the church, mosques, cultural leadership, schools, health units, et cetera are key to everybody in the community. Therefore, they can be a very good tool for information dissemination, community mobilization as well as being converging centers for the whole community.

#### **4.4 Functional opportunities for change**

As it is evident in the above discussions that to a given extent due to the Karamajong-Iteso conflict, there was a shift or change in the gender roles and relations which affected both men and women, these gender roles alterations also in turn represent functional opportunities for change as expressed below. These opportunities will be discussed in terms of access to and control over resources, women empowerment and decision-making powers.

#### **4.4.1 Access to and control over resources**

As presented above, participants agreed that previously it was only men who had full access and control over any strategic property of the household like land, cattle and others. After the conflict, it is evident that many women especially those who ended up being single parents assumed full access and control to the household property as they accumulated it. They acquired land for settlement, built houses, cultivated crops and many other formerly male dominated activities that they ended up accessing and controlling without any more male influence. One of the study participants, a women leader Mrs. Oba revealed that:

*“...previously, only men were entrusted to head the households hence giving them the authority to have full access and control over all household property. This made us dependent on men all the time and in addition, our capabilities were over shadowed by the men’s power. No one in our community could believe in women and we could also not believe in ourselves. Today, many households headed by women are more successful than those headed by men showing the public that, also women can do what men can do and even better.....”*

This indicates that, as many women acquired access and control over the different resources in society and households, they got the opportunity to explore their abilities. Therefore, this is a great opportunity for the society to realize that men and women can still serve the same purposes at different levels. Denoting that the changes in the gender roles for both men and women, represent functional opportunities for changes within the society.

#### **4.4.2 General women empowerment**

Women have had opportunities to explore their leadership capabilities at both society and household levels. They have also been involved in other significant roles working for money to support the households, educating children, meeting health care needs for households, et cetera which were previously customized for men. This has greatly empowered women with knowledge and skills of financial generation and management, as well as making financial decisions without the influence of men. However, others reported that, they work to get the money, but when it

comes to spending the money, they have to give it to their husbands to budget and decide what and how to spend it. These claimed that when they hand it over to their husbands, many of them misuse buying alcohol, dating other women and other personal interests outside the household needs like health and education of the children. As Kabeer (2005) contemplates, societal norms and culture often give a particular gender (particularly men) the power to dictate what and how family resources are governed. Often, these rules and norms give certain actors authority over others in determining the principle of distribution or exchange of resources (Becker, 1997).

However, approximately 70% of women who participated in the study agreed that there has been an empowerment which has lifted them from being house keepers and child bearers to productive citizens just as their male counterparts. A male participant Mr. Obina had this to testify:

*“.... before the conflict struck us, I believed I was the only one to meet all the needs of my family especially financially. But when we were displaced, and I lost everything, I had no option but allow my wife to start growing and selling vegetables as well as brewing ajon (local brew). The money she gets, has helped to supplement my income to meet all the financial needs of our family. I also enjoy it because I do not suffer alone in meeting my family needs. My wife and children support me now than it was before....”*

The above testimony denotes that, women have been empowered to believe in themselves and prove to men and the rest of the traditional society that working together as partners to meet family needs makes it easier than when a man works and struggles alone. although in many households the participants revealed that this empowerment is partial, due to the deeper roots of the traditions and culture in their society, they also agreed that if efforts are put in place to educate the men about the benefits of empowering women, families will change, and the society will prosper. Thus, illustrating a promising functional opportunity for changes within the society.

#### **4.4.3 Decision making**

Participants strongly agreed that concerning decision making, this was only a role played by men in the household as well as the society. It was predetermined rooted in the patriarchal nature of society where men are the leaders and the women are subordinates. This also happened that even

when a woman lost the husband, she could not do anything without consulting the late husband's brother who was given to take care of the family. Women participants vented their anger that it was pure oppression of the highest order in their community in the name of culture. Other participants especially women revealed that thanks to the conflict which has at least adjusted the situation from its original state. Implying that, the conflict situation did not only cause negative effects but on the other side also brought up positives.

However, as the conflict erupted, many families got disintegrated lost husbands and were displaced. Women took over the key responsibility of heading the households, hence, also making decisions in those households as heads. In other families where both men and women still survived, women were at the focal point of determining many aspects in the family since men had lost everything and they could not provide for their families which women started to do. Due to this, participants agreed that also in those families, women took a certain level of the right to make decisions though men could still oppress and suppress their decisions. This infers that, changes in the gender roles during and after the conflict period created a functional opportunity for drastic changes in the community as it continues to operate.

#### **4.5 Promoting the Changed Gender Roles**

In this section, suggestions made by participants on how the new gender roles can be promoted in households and the general community are presented and discussed. The discussion is made in light with the daily activities both men and women engage in, access to and control over resources, societal culture as an influencing factor, and participation in decision making.

##### **4.5.1 The daily activity profile of men and women**

The participants revealed the different activities that each gender group is involved in on a daily basis. Trying to draw down the daily activities of the male and analyzing them, all participants concurred that, men are having little work to do daily and this implied that they have a lot of time for resting and recreation. It was reflected that their busy day begins at 6:00am in the morning and ends at around 2:00pm or 3:00pm which gives them over 15 (fifteen) free hours. Developing the women's daily activity scale, it was revealed that women start their busy day earlier than men by around two or three hours in the morning. Their day begins at around 5:00am and ends late

evening regularly at 11:00pm. However, women also argued that even the remaining few hours that they could have used to relieve the daily fatigue and rest, they usually continue with productive roles. They wake up at night to check on the children, breastfeeding the babies as well as ensuring sexual satisfaction for their husbands.

This is a clear indication that, women do not have enough time to rest and enjoy recreation just as men do. And after realizing this, participants especially women argued that, there should be organized trainings or seminars that can help the men realize the very big burden they leave for the women which also affects their life span and makes it shorter. This is because, it was also commended, that in this community, the death rate for the people above 50 years is higher for the female than the men, thus, attributing it to too much work without resting. Participants agreed that if opportunity is given for the men to understand this situation, probably there will be a redistribution of roles in the households so that women get relieved from too much work as it is currently. However, men advised that if this is to happen, it should start with the cultural leaders for them to create an opening for change as well as the women because many times women also do not want men to involve in their customized roles like cooking, washing, caring for children, et cetera, though men can also do it.

#### **4.5.2 Access to and control over resources**

Another area in which gender roles and relations can be promoted for cordial relations between men and women within households is access to and control over resources. The study participants revealed that, currently in a household where a man is the head; he becomes the controller and the supreme owner all the resources in the household including household members like children. Sometimes women are left with only access to but no control over anything. For example, men own the land and if a woman wants to use it even for domestic benefits like growing food, she has to first consult the husband. This indicates that, if she wants to use it for a business like growing vegetables for sale, she has to seek permission from the man. Thus, this leaves the man with all the authority and control over the produce. This denotes that if the woman harvests and sells the products, she has to give the money out of the produce to the husband to plan its expenditure. Indeed, the man also has the right to harvest the woman's produces, sell them and use the money without her consent.

Thus, women in this community do not fully have the agency to decide how the income from farms and sometimes the small businesses they conduct in local markets. Agency characterizes an individual or household's ability to make and act on their own life choices and act on them. Yet, due to predetermined cultural norms, there remains the possibility for certain actors have the opportunity to override the agency of others by the exercising authority, use of violence or other forms of coercion (Kabeer, 2005). This means that in this case, there is a possibility of men in this community to the agency of women through their culture and societal which give them control of family resources and income

All participants in this study contended that this is not a fair household lifestyle where women are undermined and limited from accessing and controlling resources in a household. Still proposals were raised that comprehensive trainings and information sessions focusing on changing men's attitude towards women's right to have access to and control over household resources should be organized. One of the male Palam county community leaders Mr. Oga supported this by saying;

*"... all these things can change and its true, but the problem is with the men's attitudes towards access and control over those resources. We take ourselves to be far superior to the women hence oppressing them in return. As community, religious and cultural leaders, we should take the lead in educating our fellow men that women should also be given independent or joint right to access and control resources in the household..."*

This is truly in line with the gender promotion principles of equality and women empowerment which calls for equal opportunity for both men and women, as well as promoting women's rights across the board through laying strategies of limiting undermining and subordinating situations for the women in any given society.

#### **4.5.3 Societal culture as an influencing factor**

Participants disclosed that the key influencing factor in the Palam community is the culture. They asserted that it is culture which has determined everything concerning the relationship between men and women in their community irrespective of any situation. Therefore, it was



agreed that, to cause relevant adjustments towards promoting the gender relationship between men and women of the Palam County (especially the Iteso migrants) the current cultural beliefs and norms must be adjusted. However, many elder participants confessed that from their experience with their culture, it is not so easy to change unless a comprehensive strategy is laid. This as Mr. Okello said: “...can easily work if we focus on the youth generation (next generation) than the current old generation...” As it is argued in the empowerment or agency theory, cultural or ideological norms may deny women the ability to make strategic choices through unequal access to education, land, economic opportunities, and participation in decision-making in the household and at the community level (Bellows and Miguel, 2009).

He said this because he believes that the old people are fully rooted in their culture and are rigid to change. It is hard to change them from what they know as the right thing. However, it is easy to start with the youths and ensure that by the time they have grown to be elders, they would have adopted a new trend of culture and beliefs that favor men and women equally. They also proposed that they can do this through the formal education curriculum, special community gatherings for youths, religious gatherings and other traditional gatherings. If the community fully gets rooted into the idea, then it will be easy to integrate at the household level. On the other hand, however, it was agreed that the community leaders will find a way of fronting this idea and share it with different change agents within the community.

#### **4.5.4 Participation in Decision Making**

In further discussions on how to promote good gender relations within the households, matters also rotated on decision making. Women argued that they are overshadowed by men in everything and they are not allowed to make any decision in the household where the men are the heads. This implies that the ideas of women are undermined and taken to be minor or impractical. Men make decisions by themselves in total disregard of the views their female counterparts. This denotes that women are fully victims of men’s mistakes regarding irrational decisions they often make as heads of households. Pertaining to education of girl children, for example, participants revealed that, men never see value in their daughters’ education, as they sometimes force them to stop studying without consulting them and their mothers. Also, men have the monopoly over decision concerning who their daughters should marry as they often

marry them off without consulting the girls or even the mother. This is partially the reason why there are many marriage breakdowns within the community as too much authority vested to the men regarding household decisions leads to blind mistakes that are jeopardizing the society's future. Thus, this has not only revolved with in the households but also outside like in public spheres where women's ideas are still undermined by the men

Last but not least, after majority of the men affirming to women's arguments on participation in decision making, all the participants agreed that the best way to go is by developing strategies that fully empower women to participate in decisions that affect their lives. However, they agreed that the previous proposed strategies in the above discussions for instance awareness creating and information dissemination can still be employed in this same aspect, and if this is achieved, then; peace, respect, love, trust and other fruits will be shared within the households equally irrespective of sex.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the conclusion of the study and recommendations for policy makers and different stakeholders regarding how to better the relations between men and women at the household and community levels. Furthermore, recommendations are made for areas that need further research in this arena.

### **5.2 Conclusion**

The overall objective of the study was to examine the effect of the Karamojong-Iteso ethnic conflict on household relationships and gender roles among the people of Palam sub-county. The specific objectives of the study were to: establish the direct and indirect impact of the Karamojong-Iteso conflict on households in Palam Sub-county; examine how households responded and adopted to the impacts of the conflict in terms of gender relations and roles; ascertain the extent to which the changed gender roles and relations are more functional in the present situation and establishing the extent to which the new gender role and relations can be utilized for improved relations between men and women in the households. The study was conducted in the area of Palam sub-county in Katakwi district located in the central north-eastern region of Uganda.

The direct impacts of the conflict on the livelihoods of local households in Palam sub-county were cited to mainly have been loss of lives, family and households' disintegration, loss of property as well as physical and body deformities among others.

Due to the different impacts of the conflict and their various manifestations to male and female in the households, Itesots responded and adapted to new gender roles and relations differently. It was mainly women who were found to have fully responded and adapted to new roles and responsibilities, though men also did to a lesser extent. This implied that changes in gender roles and relations brought about by the conflict in form of functional opportunities for change was minimal. This was basically because majority of the male victims still portrayed themselves as holding the same superior position as they used to, before the strife. The new gender roles if

maintained can greatly improve the relationship between men and women in the households and the community at large.

Strategies suggested by study participants in fostering the adoption of new roles included but not limited to, information dissemination, organization of seminars and trainings in income generating activities as well as awareness creation aimed at changing people's attitudes towards gender roles and relations between men and women in the households and the community at large. These strategies can help improve the relations between men and women at the household as well as community levels.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

In response to the above findings, discussions and conclusions, the following are the proposed recommendations to help in improving the positive gender relations with in the Palam community for development. These are discussed in terms of partnerships and networking, community empowerment, training and workshops, cross-generational education, utilization of indigenous knowledge as well as community empowerment.

Community Empowerment where the different actors in development should also ensure that all programs and projects are planned, organized and implemented using an empowerment approach to development. This approach gives an opportunity to the community members to be at the center of their development. They participate and take the lead at all level including making strategic and short-term decisions. Therefore, to achieve improved household relationships between men and women, the two parties should be equally involved. This will help them to learn how programs are planned, implemented and evaluated, such that when need arises in future, they can be in position to solve their own problems on the back of the experiences they would have acquired prior. This will not only motivate community members to participate towards the betterment of these noble changes, but also own the programs or projects, hence, the sustainability of projects resulting from improved household relationships between men and women. In the end, this can help foster the adoption and maintenance of new gender roles.

Community awareness should also be considered as a key strategy to achieving improved household relationships between men and women. When the community is consciously aware, it

is empowered, its members actively participate in activities concerning them, and that makes them masters of their own developments. In this case, efforts should be employed to make sure that community members are aware of their individual and collective rights at all levels, roles and responsibilities, as well as being mindful of their obligations and entitlements as men or women in accordance to their local laws. On the other hand, the good social-cultural values, practices and norms should be made known to the community members. In making these community members aware, they will be able to easily adapt to changes as they arise in the community hence improved household relationships between men and women. Men can also appreciate the need to work together and help their women in the execution of domestic chores as women appreciate the importance of pulling together household resources for the betterment of the home.

Trainings and workshops should be organized to ensure that the different key stakeholders are trained and well equipped with practical knowledge and skills on how to promote and improve good household relationships. Those involved may include, community local leaders, religious leaders, women leaders, opinion leaders, teachers and many others. This will help in grounding the knowledge that can help the community acquire and sustain improved household relationships. Therefore, Government institutions, CSOs, CBOs, NGOs, FBOs and many other partners should, together develop a proper framework with the key stakeholders to be followed during these trainings and workshops for easy delivery and impact assessment.

This will also call upon more investment in action or practical research in Household relationships within Palam sub-county. Improvement in human resource capital development shall also be realized as a result, and will help in advancement of knowledge base and awareness about the issues in question within the area. Thereupon, this will help in promoting sustainability strategies so as to ensure that the future generations can also cope with the new way of life and relationships within the households.

Educational, cultural, and government institutions, CSOs and NGOs should ensure that intergenerational learning is structured and implemented. This can also be done through peer education, integrating knowledge issues in the formal curriculum so that children grow up rooted and grounded with ideals of promoting household relationships between men and women. This

will act as a sustainability program or system which will extend the new practices for eternity. Consequently, promotion of household relationship among men and women, will be strategically achieved from generation to generation.

It is important that actors working towards achieving improved household gender relations embrace scientific knowledge that is true and proven. However, it is on record that usually when a community has a problem, the best answers or solutions to it should be found from within the community itself. Accordingly, stakeholders of Palam community should also embrace the concept of devising local solutions to local problems, regardless of the presence of numerous actors who pose various textbook solutions. Community members themselves should be fully involved in finding their own solutions through utilizing their indigenous knowledge. This will help empower them into realization that they possess solutions within themselves in the community. In addition to the above, engaging the community members to find their own solutions, will make them fully embrace and own the interventions.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix I: Introductory Letter from University of Agder



Date: 27 October 2015

Visiting Address:  
Gimlemoen 17  
Phone: +47 38 14 16 20  
Fax: +47 38 14 10 28

To Whom It May Concern

Catherine TINO

This is to certify that Ms Catherine Tino from Uganda is a *hone file* student at the University of Agder, Norway. She is pursuing our MSc degree in Development Management and Planning and is planning to conduct fieldwork in Uganda. The focus of her research is to study the impact of the Karanojong-Iteso conflict on household relationships.

Ms Tino is planning to conduct her fieldwork from 7th November 2015 to 20th January 2016. I would be most grateful if Catherine Tino could be rendered any necessary assistance during the period of her fieldwork.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your assistance in this matter.

With Best Wishes,  
Yours Sincerely,



Christian Webersik  
Associate Professor  
Department of Global Development and Planning



**Appendix II: acceptance letter from Palam sub-county**

Tel: 0772452354  
Email [katakwilg@gmail.com](mailto:katakwilg@gmail.com)



Katakwi District Local Government  
Office of the Chief Administrative  
Officer  
Private Bag Katakwi

Our Ref: CR/164/2  
2<sup>nd</sup> December, 2015.

✓ **The Sub- County Chief  
Palam.**

**FIELD WORK ATTACHMENT.**

This is to introduce to you **Ms. Tino Catherine** who is a student of Agder University Norway pursuing a Masters degree in Development Management and Planning.

I am sending her to your department to carry out her research for a period of two months which commences from November to January, 2016. You will assign her work and supervise her.

Please ensure that the student does not authorize or sign any official communication and after her research, make sure that the student leaves behind a copy of the report in Personnel's office and where she is posted

  
Apio Epel Rita

**PRINCIPAL PERSONNEL OFFICER, KATAKWI.**



**Distribution:**

*Mr. Christian Webersik, Associate Professor Department of Global Development and Planning.*

*Ms. Catherine Tino.*

**Appendix III: Semi-structured interview guide for community members**

Am called Catherine Tino, a master student at the University of Agder in Norway. Am conducting a study to understand if the impact of the Karamojong-Iteso conflict led to a change in gender roles and relations in households. Your responses will be of great help in drawing conclusions to this study. This information will be kept confidential.

Thank you.

**Background and socio-demographic data**

1. Sex.....

2. What is your age?

20 years and below

20-25

26-30

31-35

36-40

40 and above

3. What is your marital status?

Single		Widowed	
Married		Divorced/ Separated	

4. What is your religion?

Catholic		Born again	
Protestant		SDA	
Muslim		Others, specify	

5. What is the education level of this person?

Primary education		Vocational/ technical education	
Secondary education		Never attended	
Tertiary education		Do not know	
Degree holder			

6. Do you have children? Yes.....No.....

If yes, how many? Male..... Female..... Total.....

6a. How many of these children were born before the conflict? during the conflict?  
after the conflict.....

**Economic background of the household**

7. Who takes care of your family financially and materially? If not you

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8. What is your relationship with this/ these person/s?

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9. What do you/ does this person/ these person do to meet family needs?

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**Decision making within households**

10. Who decides on issues of role distribution within your household? E.g who does what? What should be covered by whom financially? Who cooks food? Who takes care of the young ones?

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11. Are there particular roles that men have to play/ have responsibilities for and make decisions on and particular roles for which women have responsibilities and make decisions on?





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17. Why did you have to abandon you traditional roles as a woman/man for new roles in which you had no experience?

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18. Do you currently maintain the new roles acquired during the conflict in your household?  
Yes.....No.....

19. If no, why did you have to abandon the new roles?

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20. What challenges did you face/do you face in continuing to play the new roles in your family?

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21. Has government or any NGO been helpful in handling some of these challenges? Yes.....  
No.....

22. If yes, specify the NGO or government department. What have they done to promote better relations in your household?

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23. To what extent do you think the changes in gender roles and relations represent functional opportunities for change?

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24. Do you think government or NGOs can do something to promote the new roles for better relations in households? Yes.....No.....

25. If yes, what can they do?

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**Appendix IV: Interview Guide for local government and NGO staff**

Am called Catherine Tino, a master student at the University of Agder in Norway. Am conducting a study to understand if the impact of the Karamojong-Iteso conflict led to a change in gender roles and relations in households. Your responses will be of great help in drawing conclusions to this study. This information will be kept confidential.

Thank you.

1. When did you start working with Palam sub-county on conflict related issues

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2. What was the main goal of your work?

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3. What were the specific objectives you wanted to achieve by working in Palam sub-county as a conflict affected area?.....

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4. Are there any objectives that you have achieved so far? If yes what are the objectives?.....

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5. Are there any limiting factors in achieving any of those objectives?.....

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6. Has there been any government intervention in your activities, if yes, what kind of intervention and how have they done it?

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7. What type of gender related services do you offer communities affected by the conflict?

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8. What has been your experience in working with the communities? Have you met some challenges especially in gender roles related issues?

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9. Have you contributed to a change in gender relations within households? If yes, in what ways?

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10. In your opinion, did the conflict lead to changes in gender roles and relations? If yes, specify

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11. To what extent are the changes in gender roles and relations functional now in the post conflict phase?

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12. Briefly explain the relationship between men and women in households in Palam sub-county currently

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13. What has your organization done in promoting balanced gender roles and better relations in households in Palam sub-county?

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Thank you very much.

**Appendix V: Focus Group Discussion guide.**

**Issues of discussion in Focus Groups**

1. The direct impacts of the Karamojong-Iteso conflict on the livelihood among local households.
2. Household response and adaptive measures to the impacts of conflict in terms of gender roles and relations.
3. The extent to which the changes in gender roles and relations brought about by the conflict represent functional opportunities for change.
4. The extent to which the changes in gender roles and relations can be promoted for better relations between men and women within households.